Bingang

Club Crosby *Our 66th Year* *Winter 2002-03*

It's Time To Renew For 2003!

For most of you, it's time to renew your membership for the 2003 calendar year. Please follow these directions:

TO OUR MEMBERS IN THE UNITED STATES AND CANADA

Send a check or money order for $12, made out to CLUB CROSBY, to:
Wayne Martin, Editor *Bingang*
435 So. Holmes Ave.
Kirkwood, Mo 63122-6311

Canadian members must pay in U.S. dollars by means of a post office money order or an international bank draft drawn on a U.S. bank. Canadian currency and personal checks on Canadian banks are not acceptable to our bank.

TO OUR MEMBERS IN EUROPE

Ken Crossland of W. Midlands, U.K. is our European representative. He collects dues and does the mailing of *Bingang* for Europe and the British Isles. Magazines are air-mailed to Ken in bulk from the U.S. He distributes them to the members. Dues are $18 and must be submitted to Ken *in £ sterling in an amount equivalent to $18.00 U.S.* Please do not make payment to Ken in U.S. dollars. Send dues or notice of address change or non-receipt of *Bingang* to

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9 Arden Drive
Dorridge, Solihull
W. Midlands B93 8LP
United Kingdom

Checks or money orders should be made out to K. W. Crossland.

TO OUR MEMBERS IN AUSTRALIA, NEW ZEALAND, AND SOUTH AMERICA

We cannot accept foreign currency or personal checks, as it is too difficult and expensive to get them cashed. Money orders or bank drafts must specify payment in U.S. dollars. Personal checks will be returned, unhonored. Dues are $18.00, and journals are sent airmail. Send your money order or bank draft, made out to Club Crosby, to Wayne Martin at the address listed at the top of this page.

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VOLUME 66, NO. 2 **WINTER 2002-03**

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This issue is dedicated to Charlie Baillie, Our Friend and Colleague

Readers Write

Dear Wayne,

Thank you for your letter. Hearing from you brought back many wonderful memories of my years with The Club Crosby.

With the merger of The Club Crosby and the I.C.C. next summer, I will be forwarding photos of our Club Crosby broadcasts of the late 1940's and '50s for the archives of *Bing* magazine. As you say, this combined club will be "the best way to serve Bing well."

I will be looking forward to corresponding and working with you on behalf of our Crosby legacy.

— Gord Atkinson, Boynton Beach, FL.

Dear Wayne,

It's sad about the demise of *Bingang,* but I guess everything and everybody comes to the end eventually.

I've enjoyed my long association with Club Crosby, and I hope you have a long and enjoyable retirement.

— Bill Elliott (age 83), Naples, FL.

Dear Wayne,

Reluctantly, I wish to give up my subscription as I find that I don't have enough time these days to even start to read the magnificent issues (thanks to you), which is a shame, so someone else should read them.

Thank you for your wonderful job as Editor (I never thought Al Sutton would be equaled, but he has been!).

With every good wish, and if I find that I have more time in the future, I'll contact you. With best wishes to you and *Bingang.* The Latin American articles are *magnificent.*

— Ken Kelly, Irvington-on-Hudson, NY.

Dear Friend,

Enclosed is $12.00 for my *(overdue)* dues for 2003. Thanks for all you're doing for those of us, young and old, who will always appreciate Bing and what he gave (and gives) us.

— Richard Duncan, Salem, VA.

Dear Wayne,

Congratulations on your new issue — the best you've ever published, in my opinion anyway.

We live in a gated retirement compound here, where the median house value is about $500,000, and we have been giving copies of your magazine to our library. After about two weeks it always disappears. I don't know whether somebody takes it for reading, or if they just throw it away. There are a lot of people here from the "Bing Era" in the 30's and 40's who should be interested, but who knows?

— Bob Sunstrom, Salem SC.

Dear Wayne,

It looks like you had quite a divided board with regard to the pending merger with the International Crosby Circle. While I expect that it is in the best interest of Club Crosby to merge, it appears that the locus of operations will shift to the U.K. As a member of the ICC, I have always respected the professionalism of the organization as reflected in *Bing* and the fact that they host annual meetings in Leeds. I would hope that a counterpart meeting could be held in the U.S.A., although I recognize that geography works against this idea.

In any event, I plan to attend the Hofstra conference and look forward to meeting fellow members of Club Crosby and the ICC.

Thank you for the wonderful job you have done editing *Bingang.* It has been a class act!

— Perry Huntoon, Naperville, IL.

Editor's note: Perry did indeed attend the conference, and his report begins on page 13 of this issue.

Dear Wayne,

Yesterday, August 15, was my birthday, and what a better way to celebrate it than by receiving my copy of *Bingang.* It couldn't have come at a better time. The great articles and pictures of Mr. Crosby were my surprise party. Keep up the good work, and continued success to you and all who contribute to Club Crosby. Bing would be proud of all of the members.

— Jeff Geist, Elmwood Park, NJ.

Dear Wayne,

I received my *Bingang* magazine, and as usual you and the staff did a great job. I was glad to hear about the proposed merger of Club Crosby and the Crosby Circle.

I think you're doing the right thing to keep his memory alive. The club will be that much stronger in the long run. We owe so much to you and Mark and the rest for putting out a great magazine, and I thank all of you so much for bringing back good memories of Bing.

I'm planning on going to the Bing Crosby conference in November. I hope to see a lot of my friends there. I've been a Bing Crosby fan since 1942, when my sister came home one night with a record of "White Christmas" and have been a fan ever since.

Good luck to all of you in the future.

— Milt Cummings, Groton, CT.

The Editor's Page

WE ARE VERY LATE! We apologize for the lateness of this issue. Various problems and other obligations on the part of your editor were responsible for the delay. We think, though, that you will find this issue well worth waiting for.

THE HOFSTRA CONFERENCE. The big Crosby news of 2002 was the "Hofstra Conference" held at Hofstra University in Hempstead, NY on November 14, 15, and 16. Titled "Bing! Crosby And American Culture, " it featured lectures and discussions on many facets of Bing's career. Such noted dignitaries as Gary Giddins, Kathryn Crosby, Nick Perito, Joe Bushkin, Joe Franklin, Skitch Henderson, Will Friedwald, Buddy Bregman, Ken Barnes, and many others were present. As a matter of fact, you could say that almost "everybody who is anybody" in the Crosby world was there. The total attendance has been estimated to be from 350 to 500 people.

The fan clubs were very well represented by leaders such as Malcolm Macfarlane, Ken Crossland, Wig Wiggins, and Michael Crampton.

Club Crosby had two special representatives there. Greg Van Beek was our official greeter and spokesman. Greg met many of our members and other attendees, passed out membership forms to those interested in joining the club, and attended every meeting he could. He and his father Tom took many pictures, which we are sharing with you in this issue.

Perry Huntoon was Club Crosby's official correspondent and photographer. He also attended every event he could, sometimes catching parts of two meetings that were scheduled simultaneously.

Perry and Greg did an admirable job of capturing the excitement and joy of the conference and even the frustrations that occasionally surfaced. We are very proud to present their reports here and have used as many pictures as we could pack into these pages. Thank you, Greg and Perry!

Special thanks also go to Ernie Sutkowski, who provided special funds to process for publication the pictures used in this issue and for distributing the invitations to the Centenary Event at Gonzaga University described in the next paragraphs.

100th BIRTHDAY ANNIVERSARY CELEBRATION AT GONZAGA U. By now you have all received invitations to the Birthday Bash in Spokane. Because of our publishing schedule, we found it necessary to mail these early, since the deadline for registration was February 1.

It looks like there will be a great time to be had in Spokane, and we hope that many of you will be able to attend. Kathryn Crosby and Gary Giddins are among those who will be present, and the private reception for fan club members should be of great interest to all of you.

Our thanks go to Ruth Schmid and Dieter Pressler for their hard work in organizing and coordinating this event.

Just before press time, we learned of another 100th birthday celebration taking place on April 12, 2003 at the Irish Music Archives in Milwaukee, WI. It will be held in the Irish Fest Center, 1532 Wauwatosa Ave. and will run from 1:00 to 5:00 p.m. Kathryn Crosby and Buddy Bregman will be present. For more information contact Barry Stapleton, Ward Irish Music Archives, 1532 Wauwatosa Ave., Milwaukee, WI 53212; telephone: 414-476-3378, e-mail: <barry@irishmusicarchive.com>.

And so you have a choice of celebrations to attend, but why not go to both? Have fun!

THE NEXT ISSUE. The summer issue of *Bingang* will be coming out in August. Sadly, it will be the last of the series, but let's make it a special one! Jon Oye has already designed a beautiful cover for this issue.

Here's a suggestion: Write to us and tell us about some of your favorite articles that have appeared in *Bingang* over the past 65-plus years. There have been many marvelous articles printed in these pages, and let's reminisce about some of them. Your officers will strive to make this issue one of our very best.

In the meantime, please don't forget to pay your dues for 2003. We need the money to finance our two 2003 issues. Please don't pay beyond 2003. After August, dues will be collected by the International Club Crosby and will be due January 1, 2004. Remember that even if you are not already a member of the I.C.C., you will receive the winter issue of *Bing*. We hope that all of you will continue to be active in your fan club membership.

DEATHS. All of us were saddened by the sudden death of Charlie Baillie this past November. A tribute to him and his obituary, furnished by his wife Nancy, will be found on page 51 of this issue.

We are also sorry to report that Frank Whittaker of Calgary, Alberta, Canada, a long-time member and dedicated Bing Crosby fan, died recently.

We have just been told of the death of Catherine O'Neill of Massapequa Park, NY, who passed away quite some time ago.

THREE NEW BOOKS AVAILABLE. If you will check the book reviews on page 54, you will find three new books of interest to Bing Crosby fans. They are: *White Christmas, The Story Of An American Song,* by Jody Rosen; *Bing Crosby, Crooner Of The Century,* by Richard Grudens; and *My Last Years With Bing,* by Kathryn Crosby.

The Hofstra Experience

By Greg Van Beek

(Photographs By Tom and Greg Van Beek)

Greg Van Beek, Kathryn Crosby, Francisco Prieto (Kathryn holding Bingang *with La Moraleja article)*

THE dates November 14, 15, and 16, 2002, are ones I will remember with great fondness for the rest of my life, for I've never experienced before anything like what transpired during those days, and I doubt I will ever witness anything like it again. The Hofstra conference on Bing Crosby and American Culture was truly a lifetime event, and I am both proud and honored to say I was there and played a small part in it.

There are better-prepared writers like Perry Huntoon, whom I met and saw diligently taking notes throughout the various panels, to give the details of who said what and when they said it about Bing throughout the three days. I'm just going to share some of my own personal memories, thoughts and views on what I saw and share with you, through photographs, some of the images and scenes I encountered.

For me, the journey started at 4:50 a.m. on Thursday morning when my Dad (Tom) and I drove to the airport in Milwaukee to catch a direct flight to La Guardia airport. Tom came along partially for business reasons, but also to see his son onstage and help take photographs. Unfortunately, due to work commitments, I couldn't fly in Wednesday evening, so I missed the opening ceremony. We touched down in New York a little after 10:30 a.m., where a white stretch limousine was waiting to take us to the campus. That's what I call traveling in style!

When we arrived, everyone else was having lunch in the cafeteria. Before heading in to join the group, I visited the bookstore, where Kathryn Crosby was signing copies of her new book *My Last Years With Bing*. Kathryn recognized me right away, as we had met last year at a golf event in Rice Lake, Wisconsin. She is the most cordial, easy-to-talk-to person you'd ever want to meet. She made everyone who approached her feel special. We chatted briefly while she signed my copy of her book.

Then I picked up a copy of Richard Grudens' new book on Bing, *Crooner Of The Century*. He was seated next to Kathryn at the table, also signing copies, and told me he used some of my *Bingang* articles while researching the book and that my name appears inside — a nice compliment! It is a fine little book, with a lot of good information, anecdotes and photos of Bing. Well worth a spot on your bookshelf. Of course, so is Mrs. Crosby's book, but more on that later.

At lunch, the first person I encountered was Malcolm Macfarlane, and it was great to meet him in person. But this would be first of many such meetings, as I would soon learn. After a brief chat with Bob DeFlores, we caught the last portion of the interview with Buddy Bregman. This was it — I was finally at the event I'd been looking forward to all year!

The most gratifying meeting of all took place while waiting for the tribute to Rosemary Clooney to begin. I

Nick Perito and Kathryn Crosby

Edwin García and Greg

was standing near the entrance to the auditorium chatting with Edwin García, when in walked Nick Perito. Now Nick and I have been friends since 1995, yet we'd never met in person. It was a happy meeting for both of us. We gave one another a big hug and became inseparable for the rest of the conference. If I had to pick one incident that stands out above all others at the conference, this would be it for me! It was an added, unplanned joy to see 86-year-old Joe Bushkin as a part of this special tribute to Ms. Clooney.

Later Thursday afternoon, our good friend Francisco Prieto arrived, having driven all the way from Toronto, Canada to Hofstra. Francisco proved to be a life-saver for Nick, Tom and myself, as he had a car, so we could go to and from the campus as needed.

Also that afternoon, I had to tape an interview with a PBS television crew from Spokane, Washington. They're putting together an hour-long documentary on Bing and his impact on American culture for airing on PBS stations around the Pacific Northwest next May in conjunction with Bing's centennial. They feel confident the program will be picked up nationwide in time for the Christmas 2003 season, which will be something we can all look forward to. Francisco also taped an interview with them, concerning Bing's last day. [See *Bingang*, Summer 2001 issue.]

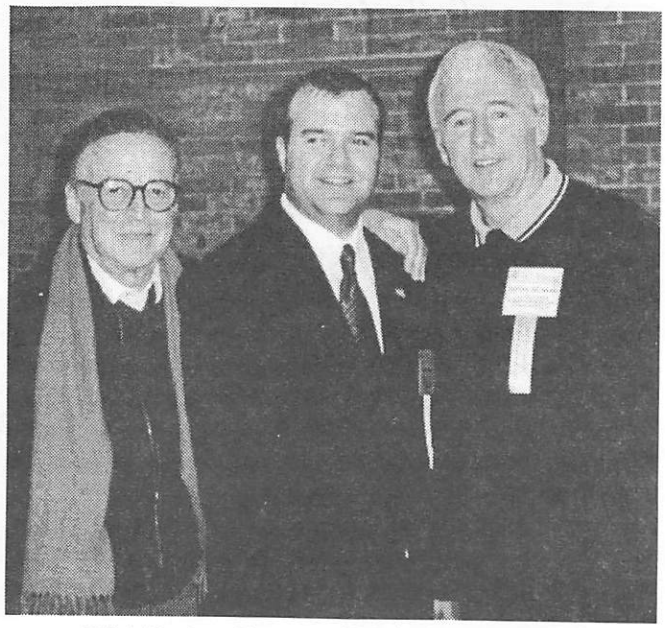
They also talked at length with Mrs. Crosby, Nick Perito, Ken Barnes, Buddy Bregman, Bob DeFlores, Malcolm Macfarlane, and many others. With all of the interviews they taped for an hour-long show, both Francisco and I are certain what we said will wind up "on the cutting room floor," but nonetheless It was fun being a "talking head" for a little while.

Thursday evening ended for us with Crosby films and videos, courtesy of Bob DeFlores and Martin McQuade. Bob showed us wonderful rare excerpts of Bing on film. We saw footage of the Paul Whiteman band, with Bing making his first appearance with him in 1928, the Universal backlot footage from June 1929, excerpts from *Two Plus Fours, Confessions Of A Co-Ed, Please, Here Is My Heart, Swing With the Stars* (1944), and *The Road To Home* (1945). The real highlight was the screen test from 1943 with a heavily made-up Bing portraying Will Rogers. Then a Christopher's short with Bing singing "Early American," followed by a 1961 clip of Bing and Rosemary Clooney singing "Anything You Can Do," excerpts from Bing's *Person To Person* interview with Edward R. Morrow in 1955, along with excerpts from Bing's 1954 GE TV show, and concluding with a 1960 medley from Bing and Perry Como.

Immediately following Bob's rare film clips, Martin McQuade treated us to an hour of rare television clips of Bing, spanning 1954-1977. We saw Bing with Jack Benny, Julie Andrews, Louis Armstrong, Mel Torme, Kate Smith, Danny Thomas, John Wayne, Bob Hope, and Barbara Walters, along with members of the Crosby family. Following this, we decided to call it a night and head back to the hotel for some shut-eye. We'd been up since 4 a.m., and it had been a long day.

I should mention that throughout the conference, during the various panels, more rarely-seen TV clips were screened. Among them were excerpts (in color) of Bing with Louis Armstrong and Rosemary Clooney on the Hollywood Palace, circa 1965-66. These too were an absolute joy to see!

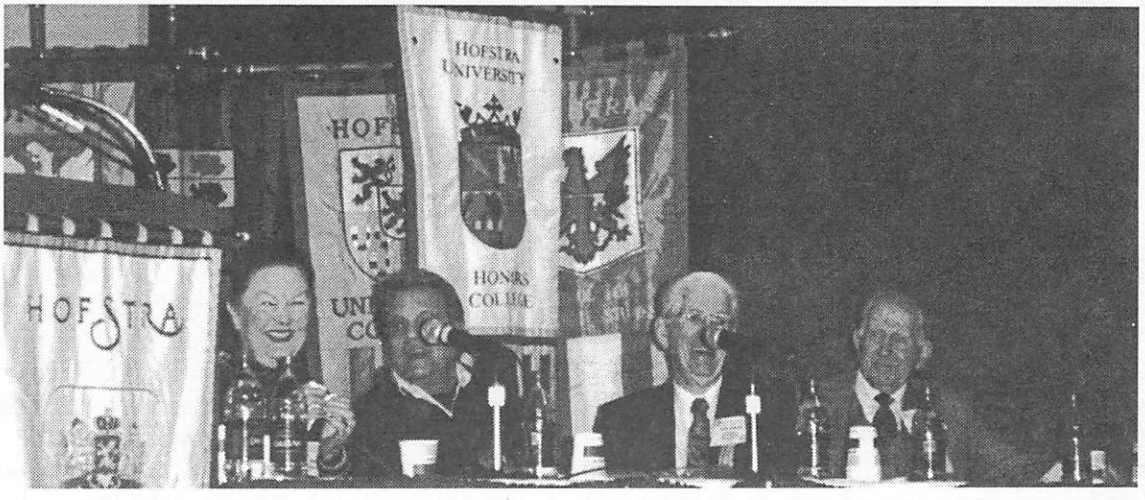
I cannot emphasize enough how wonderful it was to meet so many "Crosby people" throughout the entire conference. I don't think I've ever shook hands with so many people in my entire life! A lot of the time we'd meet in passing, either going to or from one of the panels and share a few words. Some of the dear hearts and gentle people I chatted with for various lengths of time include (in no particular order, just how they pop into my head) Judy Schmid, Jane Fitzgerald, Sue Horn



Nick Perito, Greg, and Malcolm Macfarlane

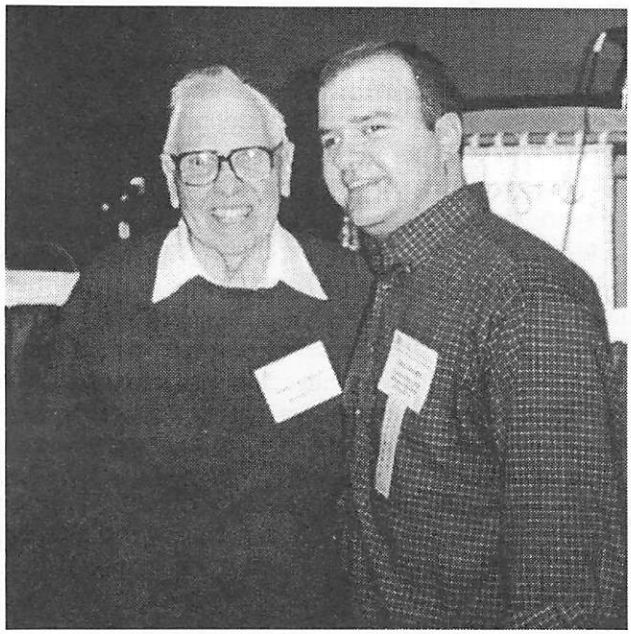
Panels

(L-R) Sister Mary Francis Moore, Greg Van Beek, Ron Field,
Malcolm Macfarlane, "Wig" Wiggins



(L-R) Mozelle Seger, Buddy Bregman, Gord Atkinson, George O'Reilly

(L-R) Gabriel Ferrer, Margaret Whiting, Joe Bushkin



Chick Wilson and Greg

(who with her hug and kiss gave me the most enthusiastic welcome of all!), Gary Giddins, Ron Hall, Ken Crossland, Michael Crampton, Jim Kukura, Steve Carras, Arne Fogel, Ken Barnes, George O'Reilly, Lenny Triola, Wig Wiggins, Buddy Bregman, Steve Crosby, Howard Crosby, Skitch Henderson, Gord Atkinson, Mozelle Seger (Bing's accountant), Joe Franklin, Ron Field, and many others. It truly felt like a big family reunion, and it was so great to be able to put a face to a name. To some extent, this was even more rewarding than the panels themselves!

Friday morning began with Nick, Francisco, Tom and me enjoying a wonderful buffet breakfast at the hotel, with Buddy Bregman at the table right next to us and Ken Barnes at another table nearby. We were all decked out in our navy blue business suits for the gala banquet that evening. We got some strange looks from the students at the campus, who probably thought we were with the Mafia or something equally as sinister.

Incidentally, it was wonderful to be able to walk throughout the campus and hear the voice of Bing permeating the halls. The *Bing Sings Whilst Bregman Swings* and 1974-76 United Artists material seemed to be heard most often. I had to smile as I waited in the cafeteria for my hamburger to be cooked, surrounded by late teens and early twenties college students listening to Bing sing "I hear music when I look at you."

After Nick finished on the Friday morning panel "Working With Bing," on which he shared the stage with Ken Barnes, Buddy Bregman and Skitch Henderson, we had to drive him back to the hotel. As we were walking through the parking lot, a bright, shiny Lexus backed out of a stall towards us. I noticed the license plate read "NY Pops" and pointed this out to Nick. I said, "This has got to be Skitch Henderson, as he is music director of the New York Pops. Sure enough, it was Skitch sitting in the back seat. We gave him a big wave goodbye and got into Francisco's lowly Nissan for the drive back to the hotel.

While we were there, Nick and I sat down for a half hour or so and went over our presentation, which was coming up the next morning. Little did we know then that our carefully-thought-out and well-scripted plans would lie in ruins, but more about that later.

Friday afternoon, Francisco, Tom and I checked out the Hofstra Museum conference exhibition, "Crosbyana: Bing's Diversity On Display" on the ninth floor of the South Campus. We went up to the tenth floor by mistake, but while we were there we were told you could see Manhattan from the windows. So we checked it out. Well, you could see in the general direction of Manhattan but couldn't really make anything out but the skyline.

So down the steps we went to the ninth floor, where a veritable cornucopia of Bing Crosby memorabilia was on display. Everything from a jukebox to a pipe to a gold record could be found. Hats off to Martin McQuade and all of the others who worked so hard to assemble this fabulous tribute to Bing. It had to have been a labor of love.

Friday evening was, of course, the banquet and events leading up to it. We had a nice presentation from veteran WOR radio and TV personality Joe Franklin, which included a screening of his December 1976 interview with Bing and Kathryn on the big screen. Then it was off to the official opening of the Crosbyana display and on to the main campus auditorium. George O'Reilly assembled a wonderful half-hour video presentation called "An Ordinary Guy Who Could Carry A Tune." It was comprised of classic film and television clips, and among those listed in the credits was our own Wayne Martin.

I don't know how we managed it, but Francisco, Tom and I had front-row seats for that and the perfor-

Ron Hall and Greg

Part of Martin McQuade's Crosbyana Exhibit

mance by Kathryn Crosby. She was introduced to thundering applause and was carrying a copy of her new book. She happily told us that the advance copies of her book (which wasn't to be released officially until November 28) had sold out in forty minutes flat! She read some extracts from various chapters, along with Bob Hope's remarks from the back cover. She, as all of us did, got misty-eyed when she read the words "Tell Bing I'll see him soon." We all know painfully well that at age 99, Bob's future is less than certain. Then, in the same pleasant voice she had when she sang "My Cup Runneth Over" with Bing, Mrs. Crosby sang "Pennies From Heaven," "Moonlight Becomes you" and "The Second Time Around," urging us to join in and "help me through them." We all did. Mrs. Crosby told us the latter tune was really written with her in mind, based on a line Bing had said to songwriter Jimmy Van Heusen, "Love is lovelier the second time around."

Following her performance, Nick Perito brought the house down with a medley of Harry Warren songs. This was an impromptu performance at Mrs. Crosby's request. Nick had not a single note in front of him, but he played the medley flawlessly. Everyone I talked to raved about both of their performances.

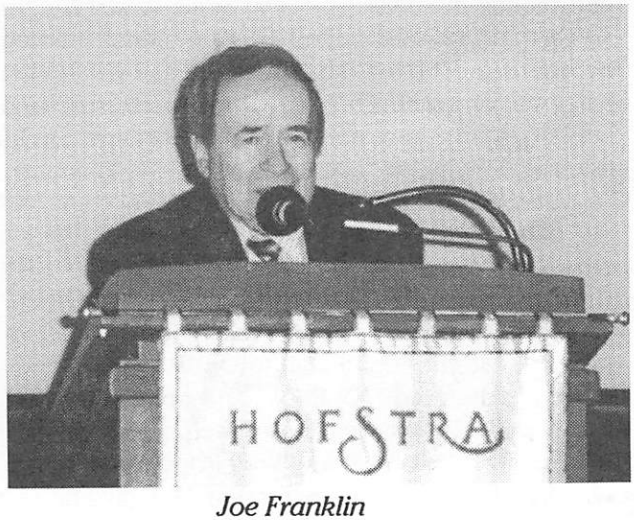
I should mention that Kathryn Crosby's book *My Last Years With Bing* is outstanding in every way. If possible, it even surpasses her previous book from 1983, *My Life With Bing* in that this book with over 400 pages has over 200 full-color photographs inside! It picks up where the previous book left off and covers the years 1966-77 with warm and witty anecdotes about life with the Crosbys. It's like being a fly on the wall, as most of the text was culled from meticulously-maintained diaries kept by Mrs. Crosby on a daily basis during her years with Bing. If you purchase a copy from www.barnesandnoble.com you'll receive a 20% discount off the retail price. You'll definitely want to add this book to your library!

It was now time for the reception and gala banquet. Everyone attending the banquet received a complimentary CD courtesy of George O'Reilly and compiled by him called *The Voice Of The Century*. No one would dispute that it was a very appropriate title. There was assigned seating, and Nick, Francisco and Tom joined Lenny Triola and his very attractive companion, Ginnie Anderson (Mrs. Crosby's best friend) at our table. We had a very nice conversation while dining and got to make new friends as a result. Then it was time for the performers to take center stage.

First, Robert Merrill of the Metropolitan Opera gave out with a rousing "America The Beautiful," followed by greetings from Kathryn Crosby and an impromptu performance by the one and only Joe Bushkin, who sang "There'll Be A Hot Time In The Town Of Berlin." At 86, he still has it! Freddie Roman, the Dean of the New York Friars Club, kept us in stitches with his jokes, followed by comments from Joe Franklin and Gary Giddins.

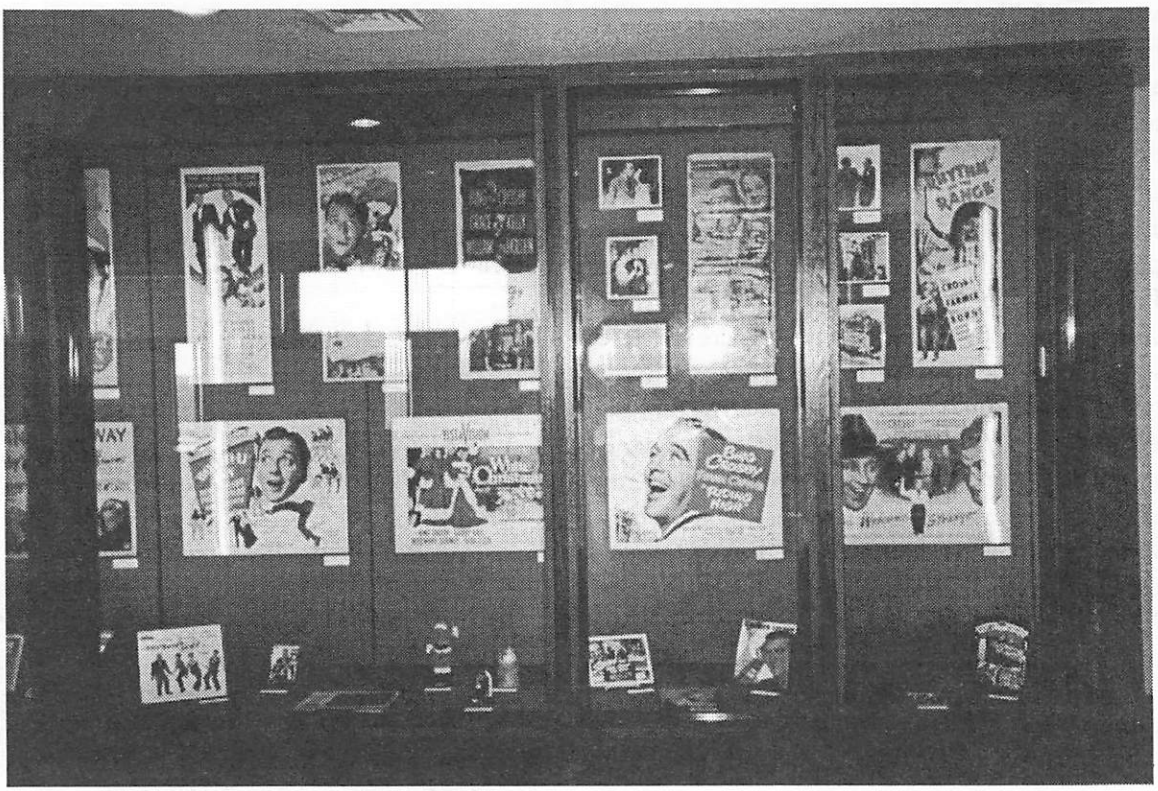
Lastly, Margaret Whiting took center stage and warbled out some tunes. Unfortunately, she was not in very good voice. This was the general consensus at our table. We decided to slip out the back door after a half-dozen songs. Back at the hotel, Nick, Francisco, Tom and I got some drinks at the hotel bar and just sat shooting the breeze until close to 1:30 a.m, when Nick and I realized we both had to be on panels at 8:30 that morning! We grabbed some fast Z's and met the next morning for breakfast.

Nick was on a panel "Bing And Other Singers," and I was on a panel "Fans Speak Of Bing" with Ron Field from Australia, Sister Mary Francis Moore, Malcolm Macfarlane and Wig Wiggins. I was most happy to see joining us in the audience none other than Gary Giddins. Saturday was a very busy day for me, being a part of two panels, meeting up with some dear friends who



Joe Franklin

"Crosbyana," Bing's Diversity on Display



Martin McQuade, Guest Curator

were dropping by on Saturday only (namely members Scott Hughes, Carmela Amari, and everyone's favorite CD man, Chick Wilson). On top of this, we had to leave at 2:45 to catch a plane back to Milwaukee.

It was during the noon hour that I happened to glance at the official program and to my horror found that the interview I was to do with Nick now began at 1 p.m., not at 12:45 as we had been told all along. I said to Nick, "What do you think of this?" He just shook his head and said, "We'll have to wing it and let them give us the hook."

That's exactly what happened. By the time we waited for everyone to arrive and got through the introductions from our moderator it was already 1:10 p.m., so we had only twenty minutes. Nick got to tell the story of the first time he worked with Bing, and we launched into a clip. All the while the clip was playing, we were onstage going through our script to figure out what to cut. Nick wanted to cut the next clip, which was "White Christmas." I (justifiably) said, "We have to do 'White Christmas.' That's going to be the showstopper." He wanted to do the third clip, which was "Accentuate The Positive" with Bette Midler instead. So we agreed just to introduce the two clips and screen them in lieu of more interview questions.

It must have appeared awkward to those in the audience, but "that's show biz," as Nick said. Having worked through the days of live TV, making cuts on the fly was nothing new to him. If I have one minor gripe about the conference it's this: Panel times weren't strictly enforced. A few presenters were intent on hogging the spotlight to further inflate their already substantial egos, and this, unfortunately, threw every one else's schedules off.

In spite of all this "backstage drama," my interview with Nick was one of the proudest moments of my entire life. To share the stage with this brilliant man was a genuine pleasure. And my Dad was seated in the first row, right next to Mrs. Crosby, along with dear friends Francisco Prieto, Scott Hughes, and Carol Bledsoe to experience it with me.

Our time at Hofstra was quickly drawing to a close, but I managed to meet up with one more friend I'd never met in person before, Chick Wilson of Select Circles. I'm sure many of you have dealt with this fine man, who has done so much to help Crosby fans obtain the latest CDs from around the world. After a brief chat with him and (again) with Ken Barnes, our merry little group said farewell to Hofstra and went back to the hotel, where we dropped Nick off, then back to the campus to await our ride to the airport.

One last surprise was in store when Gord Atkinson shared the van with us on the journey back to the airport. Tom and I were off to La Guardia, and Gord was going to JFK. So we had a nice conversation during the half-hour trip. What a nice man — and friend of Bing for so many years. He had a horror story of his own: When his driver from the airport to Hofstra on Wednesday was a maniac and managed to sideswipe a parked car, leaving poor Gord stranded for hours while the police arrived and filled out their reports. Thankfully, he switched to the limo service we had, who were all very pleasant and professional people.

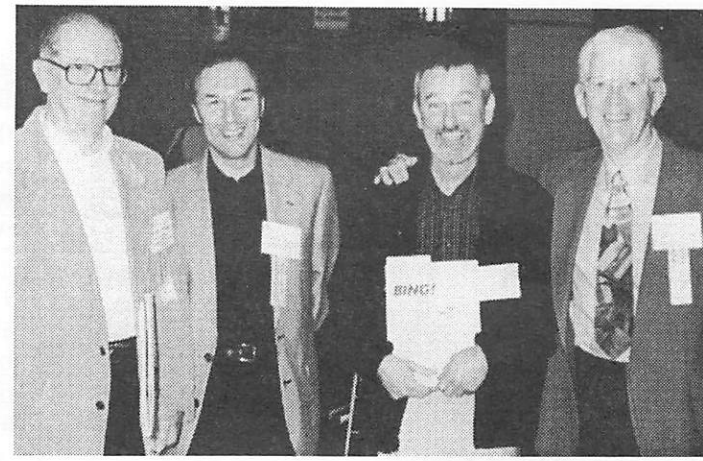
Hofstra may be over and done with, but to those who were there—those who witnessed this remarkable tribute to an extraordinary entertainer— it will live on in their hearts for the rest of their lives. I know it will in mine! G.V.B..

Kathryn Crosby

Bing At Hofstra

By Perry Huntoon

(Photographs By The Author)



Wig Wiggins, Ken Crossland, Michael Crampton, Gord Atkinson

IT was standing room only in the Plaza Rooms of the Sondra and David S. Mack Student Center at Hofstra University at noon on Friday. I noted the sign on the wall stating "Occupancy not to exceed 69 persons" and laughed to myself, as there were at least twice that number crowded into the room. I just hoped no fire marshals would come by.

The attraction? A panel discussing "BING AND FRED" that included Fred's daughter, Ava Astaire McKenzie. After watching film clips of Bing and Fred from *Holiday Inn* and *Blue Skies* and hearing two academic presentations concerning the two song and dance men, the audience was enraptured to hear Ava discuss her father, her childhood and her and her father's relationship with Bing. And this was just one of two concurrent panels being held under the auspices of the Hofstra Cultural Center as it presented a full three-day conference **"BING! Crosby And American Culture"** November 14-16, 2002.

I had been anticipating this conference with pleasure for well over a year from the time it was first announced. As a Crosby enthusiast since 1953, when I first became musically aware at age 15 and discovered a daily late afternoon hour-long radio show devoted to Bing on WMCA-570AM in New York City, I had long wished for the opportunity to meet with and discuss my favorite singer with other fans and serious students of American popular music.

Kathryn Crosby and her new book

I am currently president of the International Association of Jazz Record Collectors and a member of the *Browsers*, a Chicago-based group of big band and popular music lovers who for 22 years broadcast a weekly program of music trivia covering primarily the 1930s and 40s, first locally and then syndicated nationally by ABC Radio Networks. Bing is well-known to members of both groupings, but he is not the primary focus. Thus, I perceived the Hofstra conference, with its intensive focus on Bing, as a not-to-be-missed event.

I had some concerns when details of the conference were not immediately forthcoming. With an academic conference of this nature (as opposed to a purely fan gathering), there is a call for papers. Until the papers are submitted, it, of course, is impossible to finalize the details. When I heard that a special tribute to Rosemary Clooney was to be added to the program, it increased my fears that the conference would be "diluted" due to lack of submission of serious Crosby material. In fact, it was late September before the conference brochure was published, which detailed the planned events and timings. One look at the agenda erased all my concerns, as it was clearly going to be a very intensive three-day affair with every aspect of Bing's career being covered.

Hofstra is situated in Hempstead, Long Island and, thus, is relatively convenient to the New York metropolitan airports. Yet, because of its location, this conference attracted a large preponderance of its attendees from New York and other Middle Atlantic States. The British Isles, however, seemed to be well represented. While checking in at the registration table on Thursday morning, I asked about registration numbers and was advised that it was in excess of 300. Then, with a twinkle in her eyes, my informant confided that attendance was expected to exceed that of a comparable Sinatra conference held four years earlier, also at Hofstra. That was very pleasing news to hear, and I

Gary Giddins, Keynote Address

walked around for the next three days with a swelled chest proudly displaying my conference badge to Hofstra's student populace.

I had no prior personal acquaintanceship with anyone attending the conference, but upon checking in saw a familiar foursome kibitzing near the registration table. I immediately walked over and introduced myself to Wig Wiggins, Michael Crampton, Ken Crossland and Gord Atkinson. I grabbed the photo-op and from then on it was like old home week with everyone I talked to becoming a friend.

It would be impossible to provide a detailed critique of every panel and event, as the programming was so extensive that concurrent panels had to be scheduled to accommodate all of the facets of Bing's life. Obviously, I couldn't attend everything, so I picked the ones of most interest to me, but sometimes sat in for at least a few minutes on another panel. I'll present an overview with comments on various discussions that occurred during the course of the three days.

The setting within the Hofstra University campus was quite convenient. Larger events took place in the Student Center Theater with other panels being located in the Plaza Rooms on the other side of the student center building or in the Cultural Center Theater in the Axinn Library building connected to the student center by a skyway across Hempstead Turnpike. With food court facilities in the student center, there was no need to ever leave the facilities during the daily programming. This worked to everyone's advantage as Conference Director Ruth Prigozy put together a program that left little idle time.

The opening ceremonies Thursday morning featured several speakers whom we were to see much of during the succeeding sessions. **Kathryn Crosby** offered her greetings. She talked about her recently published book, *My Last Years With Bing* and later appeared for a book signing at the Student Center Bookstore. Of particular interest was her comment that there are lots of old tapes that need to be organized, mastered and placed on the market. There was no elaboration on just what kind of material this is, but it was good to see her take an interest in marketing Bing.

Ken Barnes, producer of six albums of Bing in the 1975-77 period, talked about recording Bing in the studio with the full orchestra at his back. No isolation booth for Bing with later re-mixing to achieve the desired result! Bing was probably the last major singer to record this way. **Buddy Bregman** discussed his two weeks with Bing recording the *Bing Sings Whilst Bregman Swings* album. Knowing that Bing always preferred to work early, Buddy scheduled recordings from 9:00 a.m. to noon. He found it amusing to have top-flight jazz musicians like Harry "Sweets" Edison, Maynard Ferguson and Frank Rosolino show up bleary-eyed after late night gigs. Bing cranked out six tunes by 11:15 a.m., and Buddy was amazed. A similar second session finished the album.

Author **Will Friedwald,** reading his paper, unfortunately spoke at a very rapid pace. Nevertheless, he made some striking points. Will considers Bing an architect of modern recording techniques. By his use of the microphone, he single-handedly made the world a smaller, more intimate place and transformed the audience from a collective to the individual. Per Will, Bing invented "American popular singing." **Gary Giddins,** in the first of many appearances, told a couple of stories about incidents on Bing's TV shows, both funny and poignant. **Nick Perito,** Musical Director for both Bing and Perry Como, discussed how he came to do the "Hollywood Palace" shows after the tragic death of Mitchell Ayres.

At the first panel I attended immediately after the opening ceremonies, the topic was "THE SONG

Skitch Henderson

SAD TRIP HOME—The twin sons of Bing and Dixie Lee Crosby step from a plane as they rush to the bedside of their mother. Philip, left, and Dennis, 18, are students at Washington State. At right are Bob Crosby, in plaid shirt, the crooner's brother, and Leo Lynn, a friend of the family.—(AP) Wirephoto

MRS. BING CROSBY
In coma, near death

Dixie Lee Crosby Still in Coma; Crooner, Sons in Bedside Vigil

BEVERLY HILLS, Oct. 29 (AP)—Dixie Lee Crosby, 40, wife of Bing Crosby, lay in a coma near death today.

The crooner was at her bedside. So were their four sons, Lindsay, 14; Gary, 19, and the twins, Philip and Dennis, 18. The last three flew home from college last night.

In ill health for several years, Dixie underwent a serious abdominal operation last July. Her condition became critical several weeks ago. A close friend says she is suffering from kidney ailments.

Dixie rallied sufficiently to permit Bing to go to France recently to make the movie "Little Boy Lost." She left her bed against doctors' orders last Saturday to greet her husband at the railroad station upon his return from abroad. She suffered a relapse Sunday and sank into a coma yesterday.

Dixie, who gave up film stardom to be a wife and mother, was born Wilma Wyatt, in Harriman, Tenn., Nov. 4, 1911. Her father, E. E. Wyatt, is living at nearby Camarillo. Her mother died years ago.

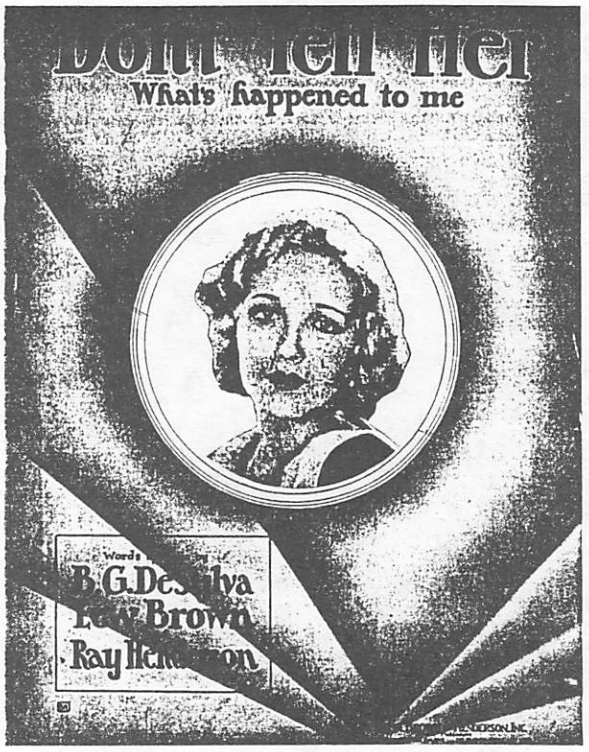
An only child, she was reared in New Orleans and Chicago. She got her start as a singer in the latter city and assumed the stage name of Dixie Lee.

She played in the hit musical, "Good News," and introduced the song, "Varsity Drag."

She came to Hollywood in 1928 and next year played in Fox Movietone Follies. She appeared in several musicals before marrying Bing in 1930. At that time friends warned her that Bing, then a little known singer, would never amount to much.

Although she virtually retired from films after her marriage, she did appear in several pictures in the mid-Thirties. Several years ago she appeared with the boys on Bing's radio show.

October 29, 1952



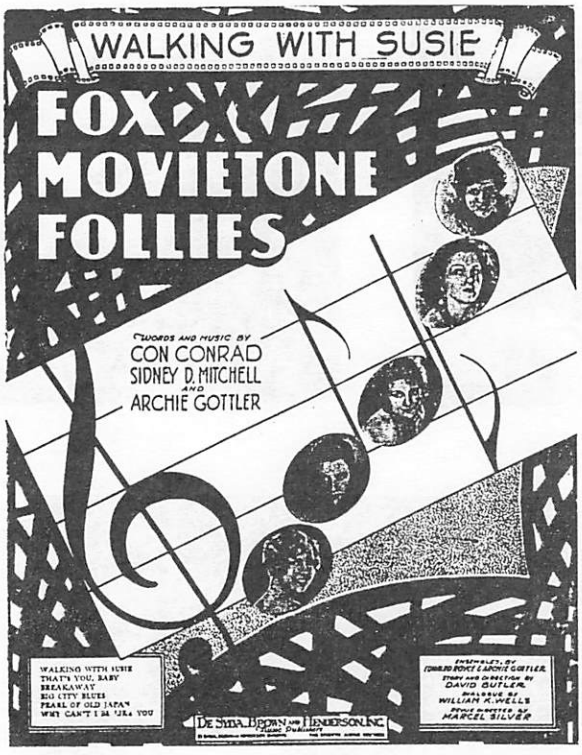
1930

1935

1935

1935

Sometimes when she thought Bing might be taking himself a little too seriously, Dixie took it upon herself to bring him back down to earth by ribbing him about his early "crooning" days. Bing would respond in kind by goodnaturedly reminding Dixie of her "hit" film numbers such as "Doing The Boom Boom" and "Lookie, Lookie, Lookie, Here Comes Cookie".



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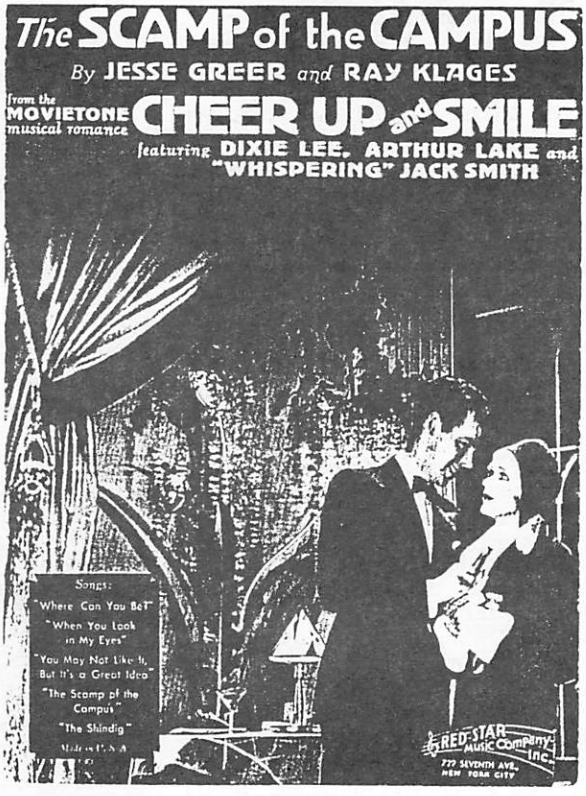


1930

The Films Of Dixie Lee:
Fox Movietone Follies (1929), Why Leave Home? (1929), The Big Party (1930), Cheer Up And Smile (1930), Happy Days (1930), Let's Go Places (1930), No Limit (1931), Night Life In Reno (1931), Darn Tootin' (1931), Manhattan Love Song (1934), Love In Bloom (1935), Redheads On Parade (1935) .

—o—

Mrs. Bing Crosby's Hobbies

Mrs. Bing Crosby, wife of the NBC crooner, began her hobby of collecting Copenhagen china about seven years ago, when Sue Carol presented her with the first piece — a little dancing girl. Mrs. Crosby was so intrigued with china that other friends began showering her with it at Christmas and other holidays. When she and Bing went to Bermuda on a vacation trip three years ago, she picked up a particularly enchanting item — a figure of a girl milking a cow with a tiny dog looking up at her inquiringly.

Another hobby of Dixie Lee Crosby is that of collecting perfume bottles, which was begun when she was a little girl and has developed into a carefully selected, unique collection of more than 300 pieces. There are perfumes shaped into tiny pianos, opera glasses, dancing girls, huge bottles of imported scents ranging from the bizarre to the beautiful. Mrs. Crosby keeps most of her perfume bottles in her large, mirrored dressing room. Not only she enjoys them; the Crosby's four young sons delight in counting and fingering "mommy's perfumes." So careful are they that not one of the delicate bottles has been broken.

—o—

HOBBIES October, 1942

Bing stands next to Dixie's porcelain collection during the airing of Edward R. Murrow's CBS television program "Face To Face" on December 3, 1954.

REMEMBERING DIXIE LEE CROSBY

Film Actress Wedded to Orchestra Leader

Dixie Lee, Hollywood screen actress, who yesterday became the bride of Murray Crosey, 26, orchestra leader, in a church ceremony in Hollywood. Miss Lee, who is 20 years of age, was born in Hinman, Tenn., her real name being Wilna Wyatt. Crosey's orchestra is well known on the West Coast.

not as Berlin originally envisioned. Nor did Crosby ever record the song's initial first verse, which reflected its place of composition: "The sun is shining/The grass is green/The orange and palm trees sway. I've never seen such a day/in Beverly Hills LA/But it's December the 24th/And I am longing to be up North." Berlin soon realized the first verse contributed little to the appeal of the song and actually dulled its power. The composer ordered that the sheet music henceforth omit the first verse. Like other composers, Berlin was loathe to change his song, but he made the right decision. Eliminating the first verse helped ensure the timeless appeal of "White Christmas." The song was no longer rooted in a certain locale and instead invited listeners everywhere to share in its sentiments.

Like the original lyrics, the first recording of "White Christmas" didn't survive either. The song was such a chartbuster that the original masters of 1942 were quickly worn out by all the pressings. Crosby had to return to the studio on March 19, 1947, accompanied once more by the John Scott Trotter Orchestra, to re-record the song. The second session, the one usually still heard today, was remarkably faithful to the first.

An Unprecedented Smash

Despite Berlin's confidence in the song, "White Christmas" was a surprise hit. Many involved in the production of *Holiday Inn* put their money on "Be Careful, It's My Heart" as the song that would emerge as the chart topper. When the movie premiered, the influential Tom Pryer of *Daily Variety* flatly told Berlin that "White Christmas" was too schmaltzy to make much of an impact. *Time Magazine's* review of *Holiday Inn* didn't even mention the song.

Appropriately, the public had the final word on the song's success, with U.S. soldiers leading the way. "White Christmas" was released in the darkest days of World War II as Hitler reigned triumphant in Europe. Homesick and fearful, the GIs, who were hunkered down in Britain, North Africa, and the Pacific, clamored for the song. In fact they couldn't hear it enough. "There was hardly a Post Exchange (PX) jukebox anywhere that did not feature Bing Crosby's recording of the song . . .that [song] touched many a GI heart," observed Edward Jablonski in *Irving Berlin: American Troubadour.* Crosby witnessed firsthand the power of the song on his tours for the troops. "I sang it many times in the field in Europe for the soldiers. They'd holler for it, they'd demand it, and I'd sing it. They all cried. It was really sad."

"White Christmas" lagged behind "Be Careful, It's My Heart" for a scant two weeks before zooming to No. 1, where it stayed for an amazing 11 weeks. By Christmas the sheet music had sold a million copies, which was simply unheard of. The song eventually spawned the movie *White Christmas,* the leading box-office draw of 1954, and continued year after year to rise on the charts. All together, "White Christmas" landed on the Top 30 pop charts 17 times, proving that its appeal went way beyond its connection with the war. Berlin, no rookie when it came to success, was flabbergasted at the popularity of the song. In one of his "up" moods, he boasted that the song had become "an industry" all its own

The fact is, Crosby and Berlin were just plain lucky, too, catching a new and awesome wave of the burgeoning post-World War II pop culture. Until "White Christmas," Christmas music belonged to classical artists and church choirs. Crosby's "Silent Night" in 1935 was a rare exception. Other Christmas songs that happily entered into popular culture were "Santa Claus Is Coming To Town," written by Haven Gillespie in 1934 but peaking in popularity years later, "A Christmas Song" ("Chestnuts roasting on an open fire . . ."), by Mel Tormé and Robert Wells in 1945, and Johnny Marks' "Rudolph The Red-Nosed Reindeer" in 1949.

Post-World War II America was worlds away from the America that existed before the war, and "White Christmas" helped define the new, robust joy of the Christmas season in a prosperous society. One of America's Christmas rituals became listening to popular artists sing of the holiday merriment.

The song was a gift to the nation and a wonderful present to its creators as well. Crosby's star shone so brightly by 1942 that he was assured of icon status until he died. But "White Christmas" gave him a new identity as a purveyor of Christmas tidings. His Christmas television specials with his family in his later years leveraged this role. Crosby had been fortunate to have "White Christmas" land in his lap, as his autobiography *Call Me Lucky* acknowledged. When he died in 1977, every obituary noted his irrevocable association with Berlin's classic song.

Berlin outlived Crosby by more than a decade, dying peacefully in his sleep in 1989 at the ripe age of 101. "White Christmas," along with his "God Bless America" and "Easter Parade," was often cited as one of the three top songs of the 20th century. In fact, "White Christmas" was ranked as the second-greatest song of the 20th century last year by the National endowment of the Arts and the Recording Industry Association of America. ("Over The Rainbow" was No. 1, while "God Bless America" captured No. 19.)

Sadly, Berlin became a recluse in his waning years, as well as increasingly irascible and moody. The man who brought musical joy to others needed some holiday cheer himself. As biographer Bergreen recounted, a group of Berlin devotees knew how to lift his spirits. When Berlin was in his 90s, they gathered in front of his home every Christmas Eve and serenaded the composer with "White Christmas." One year the frail, cantankerous Berlin invited them in, bear hugged them and exclaimed that it was the best Christmas gift he had ever received.

boy left home and began singing in local saloons for spare change. Soon after, he worked as a singing waiter in Chinatown and began writing his own lyrics and songs, earning his first songwriting credit in 1907 for the lyrics to "Marie from Sunny Italy." That same year he changed his name to Irving Berlin. Four years later the 23-year-old composer was catapulted to international stardom after writing the Tin Pan Alley sensation, "Alexander's Ragtime Band."

There was only one Irving Berlin. But what he had in common with millions of other immigrants was a love for his adopted country. A patriotic assimilated Jew who meant every word of "God Bless America" (which he wrote during World War I), Berlin wrote a hit "soldier show" for each of the world wars: *Yip Yip Yaphank,* a Ziegfeld-style revue written during World War I, and *This Is The Army,* composed during World War II. By 1941 Berlin was a celebrated composer, writing for both Broadway and the silver screen.

A Song Is Born

Holiday Inn, a movie based on the major U.S. holidays, was a project close to Berlin's heart. Released in 1942, the movie contained "Easter Parade," "Say It With Firecrackers," "Plenty To Be Thankful For," and nine other first-rate Berlin songs besides "White Christmas." Berlin's yuletide number was written the year before while the composer was stuck in Hollywood, far from his home and family in New York. The nostalgia that forms the core of the song rose from the heartfelt longing he had for his loved ones. Ironically, his paean to a snowy holiday was conceived amid the palm trees and warm weather of Los Angeles.

A chronic insomniac, Berlin wrote the song in one night, finishing up as dawn glimmered. The veteran songwriter described how the song poured out of him: "We working composers, all too often, in the interest of expediency, sharpen our pencils, get that square sheet of paper and become too slick. Those forced efforts are "square" songs. But sometimes a song is natural. We may start it to order for a specific scene or show, but our subconscious begins to work and the song is just there."

That morning Berlin, whose moods ranged from abject self-pity to boastful proclamations, told his transcriber, Helmy Kresa, that this is "not only the best song I ever wrote, but the best song anybody ever wrote." Kresa was dubious until Berlin sat down at the piano to play the song. "When he sang the chorus, I knew it really was the greatest song ever written. I was as thrilled as he," Kresa related to Berlin biographer Laurence Bergreen in *As Thousands Cheer: The Life of Irving Berlin.*

Although he was a Jew, Berlin was very emotional about Christmas for several reasons. His son, Irving Jr., was found dead in his crib on Christmas Day 1928, less than a month after he was born. The tragedy that morning quickly led to another highly emotional moment for the Berlins. When news of the child's death spread, the couple was contacted by Irving's father-in-law, Clarence Mackay, who initiated a tearful reconciliation with Irving and his wife Ellin. Two years earlier Mackay, the Long Island telegraph company magnate, had promptly disinherited his daughter after Irving and she had eloped.

Christmas also was significant to Berlin because it brought back happy memories of childhood. Irving could remember himself as a five-year-old on Christmas Day wandering over to the apartment of their neighbors, the O'Hares, who, despite being as poor as the Balines, celebrated Christmas with a tree, presents, candy, and delicious non-kosher food. Berlin never forgot the joy he felt in that home on Christmas.

While it may seem odd that a Jew penned a popular song celebrating a holiday marking the birth of Jesus, it's worth noting that despite being staunchly patriotic, Berlin was not particularly religious. Consequently, "White Christmas" focuses more on the holiday cheer of the season and makes no reference to a crèche or savior. To drum up publicity for the song after its release, Berlin even posed with his family decorating a Christmas tree. For Irving, the joy of Christmas was wrapped up in family, fond memories, and inner peace, just as the song relates.

If Berlin seemed an unlikely candidate to pen a Christmas classic, Crosby as its singer was a natural fit. In 1941 the beloved singer was near the height of his unprecedented career. In the 1940s and '50s Crosby was the host of radio's most popular musical program and the top box office star in Hollywood. He was America's first pop star, beloved for his easygoing, unruffled public persona as much as for his masterful crooning. When Berlin handed him "White Christmas," America's number one songwriter entrusted what he regarded as his best song to America's top entertainer.

Crosby consequently recorded "White Christmas" for Decca on May 29, 1942. The crooner carried an invincible confidence in his ability to nail a song from the start, hence his nickname "One-Take Crosby." It took all of 18 minutes for him to record the song that would sail into record history. For his part, Crosby knew how to massage a song like no one else. "Bing's voice has that mellow quality that only Bing's got," Louis Armstrong once said. "It's like gold being poured out of a cup." Crosby sang "White Christmas" as if he were born to.

Considering it unethical to "cash in" on the Christmas season, Crosby had his publishers set up a separate account for his holiday songs to ensure that the royalties were donated to charity.

Interestingly, the song that topped the charts was

"The Best Song Anybody Ever Wrote"

By Jay Copp

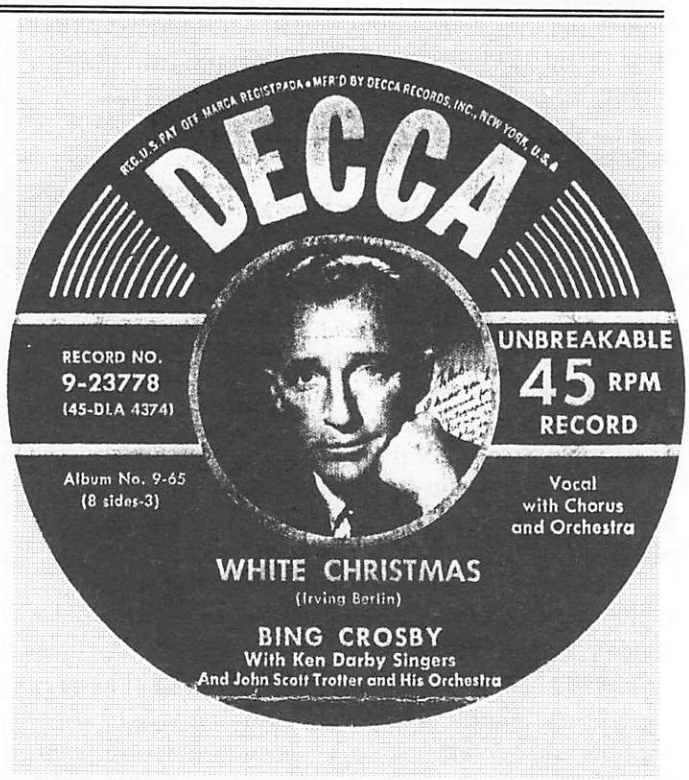
This article originally appeared in the December 2001/January 2002 issue of THE ELKS MAGAZINE, *© 2002. Courtesy of member Virgil Edwards of Eugene, OR.*

DESPITE being one of the most prolific songwriters of his time, Irving Berlin still suffered from periodic bouts of self-doubt. So it was with jittery nerves that in 1941 he approached Bing Crosby to go over a song he had written for the movie *Holiday Inn.* Berlin sang the new offering himself in his squeaky tenor — not exactly the ideal showcase for any song. The 678th tune written by Berlin had deceptively simple lyrics and a wistful melody. The premier entertainer in America at the time, Crosby rarely gave direct praise. Yet upon hearing the new song, the singer took his signature pipe out of his mouth, paused briefly, and said, "You don't have to worry about this one, Irving."

Crosby couldn't have been more right: "White Christmas" was a sensation. Crosby's recording, which hit the charts on October 3, 1942, reached number one by the end of the month and went on to sell more than 30 million copies to become the best-selling record of all time. Since the song's initial release, more than 200 artists have recorded "White Christmas," including such diverse acts as Frank Sinatra, Ella Fitzgerald, Elvis Presley, the Supremes, Barbara Streisand, and Garth Brooks. More than just a hit song, "White Christmas" has become a cultural treasure whose appeal transcends lines of age, race, and musical taste.

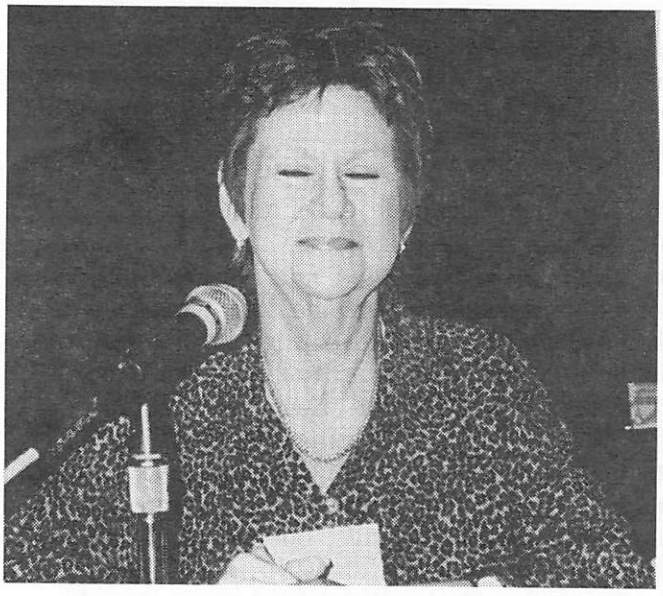
For more than 50 years the song has been faithfully trotted out during the Christmas season, at which point it goes into heavy rotation on countless radio stations and at the mall. And yet Americans seemingly never tire of the song. That's really not surprising, given that just about everyone cherishes memories of Christmases past. Through the beauty of its music and words, "White Christmas" continues to tap into powerful emotions.

What accounts for the song's appeal? Any collaboration of Berlin and Crosby could have been expected to produce solid results. But the song was a rare achievement, a perfect marriage of verse and melody, sentiment and concept. Berlin's lyrics captured the wistful nostalgia that Christmas evokes. Said Rosemary Clooney, who sang the song in the movie *White Christmas,* "The feeling it imparts is exactly the feeling you want to have on December 25th and the days leading up to it."



From Baline to Berlin

The son of Russian immigrants, young Israel Baline first arrived in the United States in 1893 at the age of five. One of eight children, Israel grew up on New York City's poverty-stricken Lower East Side, where he received just two years of formal education, due in large part to the death of his father, who passed away when the child was just eight. Six years later the young



Nicki Lee Barbour Foster
(Peggy Lee's daughter)

Fancy Meeting You Here, by Professor **Gilbert Gigliotti** of Central Connecticut State University and a recital of Peggy Lee's involvement with Bing by her daughter, **Nicki Lee Barbour Foster.** She described how nervous Peggy would be when performing on Bing's radio or TV shows, but to calm herself, she would stand where she could see Bing's feet and then would recover.

A participant scheduled to discuss the Andrews Sisters didn't show, and this left a big gap in the programming. Nobody on the panel was conversant with Bing's involvement with earlier girl singers and despite Malcolm Macfarlane's question trying to direct the discussion in that direction, there was no reaction. Thus, not only the Andrews Sisters, but the Boswell Sisters and other girls going all the way back to Loyce Whiteman (on Bing's first duet recording, "Ho Hum" with Gus Arnheim) all got short shrift.

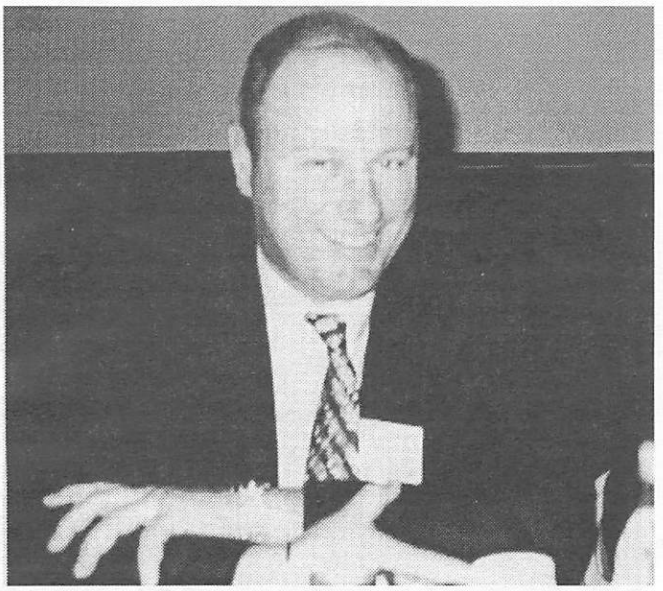
A closing reception with fruit, pastries and coffee wound down this conference. An intensive three days of Bing left me carrying several of his tunes around in my head for days afterwards. A tremendous amount was packed into three days, and it was not only impossible to attend every panel, but it proved impossible to keep every panel on schedule. With no slack time, there was no way to recover.

* * * *

Overall, the conference balanced all of Bing's activities (recording, film, radio-TV, and other business interests) with various personal relationships (Hope, Astaire, Clooney, *et al).* For myself, the music is the enduring legacy of Bing Crosby. I would have liked to see more emphasis and analysis on the recordings. But fortunately, we have Gary Giddins' biography, *A Pocketful of Dreams* to turn to for that. All in all, this conference was a great success and hopefully a harbinger of a resurgence of interest in the career and legacy of Bing Crosby.

Tom Van Beek and July Schmid

Kathryn Crosby and Richard Grudens signing copies of their new books



Howard Crosby (Bing's nephew)

eliminate road rage.

Professor **Arnold J. Smith** played several recordings: "I'm Coming, Virginia," with Paul Whiteman; "Some Of These Days," with Frankie Trumbauer; "Your Socks Don't Match," with Louis Jordan; "Personality," with Eddie Condon; "Ol' Man River," with Buddy Cole; and "I've Got Five Dollars," with Buddy Bregman. Unfortunately, time constraints did not always permit a full hearing. During a brief question and answer period, I asked about the poor reception of the Bing/Basie album. **Gary Giddins** explained that the problem was the material. The producers wanted fresh, new tunes, and neither Bing nor Basie resisted. As a result, the performances, while competent and professional, are somewhat perfunctory as compared to what could have happened. Because of the interest level in this panel, I had to miss the film panel on "THE ACTOR," in which a section dealing with Bing casting against type in *The Country Girl* would have been of interest.

Greg Van Beek conducted a charming lunchtime interview with **Nick Perito.** Nick first met Bing on an Ed Sullivan show, where Bing was to perform "True Love." Nick was to perform a concertina imitation on accordion. He was to do a four-bar introduction after which the curtain would rise and Bing would sing. Unfortunately, the curtain got snagged, and Nick had to improvise on the accordion for the better part of a minute before Bing could make his appearance.

Following the lunch interview, a third panel on film, "CROSBY'S VERSATILITY IN FILM," unfortunately conflicted with "BING AND LOUIS," in which **Will Friedwald, Arnold J. Smith,** jazz critic **Bill Milkowski, Gary Giddins,** and **Joe Bushkin** participated. Along with some fine papers, we were treated to the performances of "Now You Has Jazz" from both the 1957 Edsel Show and the 1977 Mysen concert. **Kathryn Crosby,** who sat in on the discussions, told how she met Louis just after she and Bing were married, and he said to her, "Now you has jazz." She remembered that while working on the set of *High Society,* Bing was always happiest coming home after working with Louis.

The penultimate panel I attended was "BING AND FRANK," with **Charlie Pignone,** President of the Sinatra Society of America, as moderator. **Roger Gilbert** of Cornell University described the differences between Bing and Frank in the recording studio. Bing was always early and would talk to the musicians as old friends. Frank would come in with his entourage and be unapproachable. Another story revolved around the making of *High Society,* when Frank started arriving at the set habitually late. This started to cause serious disruptions to the schedule, but everyone was too intimidated to talk to him. Finally, someone suggested that Bing do that. The next time Frank arrived late, Bing called him over, spoke to him briefly, and Sinatra was never late again.

Joe Bushkin amused the audience by recounting how Frank would sit next to him while on the Tommy Dorsey bandstand and give him a poke any time he saw a girl lifting her skirt high while on the dance floor. Somewhat off topic, **Bob DeFlores** related his story of finally being invited to Bing's home in 1977 to show Bing some rare films. They spent a wonderful afternoon and agreed to trade tapes in the future. Unfortunately, Bing passed away before anything more developed. I had to skip a concurrent panel "BING ABROAD-2, THE IRISH CONNECTION."

Wrapping up the conference topics were panels on "BING AND BUSINESS," where Bing's relationship to Pebble Beach and magnetic tape, among other things, were discussed. I opted for "BING AND THE GIRL VOCALISTS." Moderated by **Buddy Bregman,** the panel included a great analysis of the Bing and Rosie album,

Perry Huntoon and Buddy Bregman

Ada Astaire

California to visit relatives and ended up in Hillsborough. Bing made arrangements to see a Giants baseball game, as the Pirates were in town. Howard, a teenager, played sports and was thrilled to go. What he didn't know was that Bing arranged for him to suit up with the Pirates, engage in batting practice, and then sit in the dugout during the game alongside manager Danny Murtaugh. It was then that Howard realized that Bing was a "big deal." There were also brief comments by **Gabriel Ferrer** and **George O'Reilly.**

The mid-afternoon concurrent panels covered "BING AND OTHER SINGERS -1," which I skipped (but which included discussions of Johnny Mercer and Al Jolson) and "THE CULTURAL AND HISTORICAL BACKGROUND OF THE CROSBY ERA," during which we were treated to Bing's recordings of "A Pocketful of Dreams" and "Pennies From Heaven," and panelists **Gary Giddins,** Professor **Morris Dickstein** and author/critic **Wilfred Sheed** discussed the effects of the Depression and World War II on popular music and the Crosby era.

The afternoon closed with a presentation by **Joe Franklin,** host of New York's WOR-710 AM *Down Memory Lane* show, of a televised interview that he did with Bing. This was followed by the official opening of the Hofstra University exhibition, *Crosbyana: Bing's Diversity On Display,* which occupied a gallery on the ninth floor of the Axinn Library and contained many mementos of Bing's career. Due to another commitment, I missed the Gala Banquet and Cocktail Reception held that evening. **Kathryn Crosby** made a special address and **Margaret Whiting** was the featured performer.

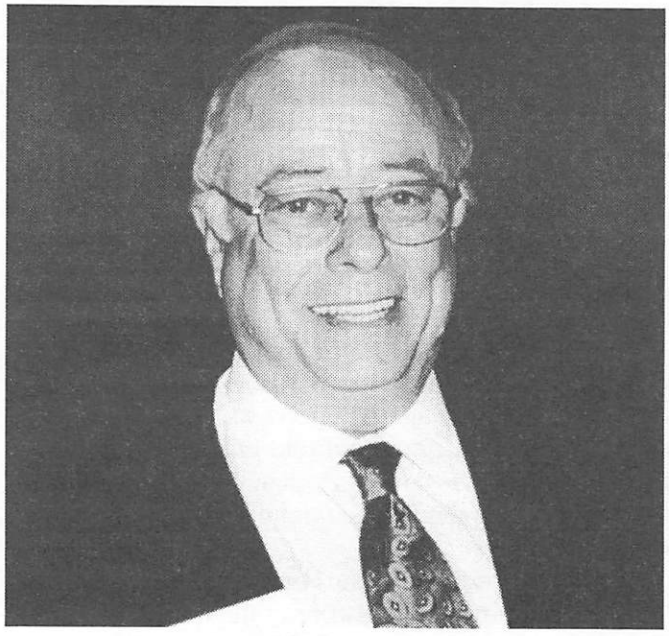
For the final day, Saturday, concurrent panels were held on "BING AND OTHER SINGERS-2" (Dick Haymes, Tony Bennett and Perry Como) and "FANS SPEAK OF BING," during which moderator **Wig Wiggins** disclosed that Club Crosby was the oldest fan club still continuing (since 1936) and **Malcolm Macfarlane** commented about the forthcoming merger with the International Crosby Circle. Quite a few of the audience were members of one or both of these clubs. **Greg Van Beek** read his paper about Bing's last day, October 14, 1977, a story that will be familiar to *Bingang* readers.

The following concurrent panels dealt with "THE COLLECTIONS," primarily focused on Gonzaga University, and "BOB AND BING/BING AND BOB," which, not surprisingly, attracted the larger audience. **Ken Barnes** detailed the plans for a Hope/Crosby album that had been enthusiastically agreed upon by both performers. Bing met Ken in London and told him he would see him in California in two weeks to sign the contract. Bing then flew off to Spain for the fateful golf date on October 14, 1977.

Writer and editor **Gregg Hammond** argued that Bing was the primary motivator of the comedy in the "Road" pictures. Popular mythology thinks of Bing as being a straight man, a serious misperception. The late start of this panel and its spirited reception by the audience caused it to run seriously late. Gary Giddins had to cut moderator Ken Barnes off despite pleas for just five minutes more.

The next panel was the one I was most interested in hearing, "BING AND JAZZ," with several serious jazz critics on hand. **Buddy Bregman,** the moderator, grew up on Jazz at the Philharmonic, Ella, and Charlie Parker. To him, Bing was the singer of "Too-Ra-Loo-Ra-Loo-Ral" and not thought of as a jazz singer. But when Buddy joined Verve Records and thought Crosby would be a great addition to the roster of artists on this fledgling label, he listened to all the old Crosby records and discovered Bing's jazz side. Many years later, after the Crosby/Bregman album had been released on CD, Buddy received a letter from a young listener who suggested that the CD be given out to all new drivers by the Division of Motor Vehicles, as listening to it would

Steven Crosby (Gary's son)



Bob DeFlores

to take "A Ballad For Americans," written by two communists, and turn it into a highly patriotic plea for a pluralistic America.

We picked right up again Friday morning at 10:00 a.m. with a delightful "WORKING WITH BING" panel. **Skitch Henderson** met Bing through Delores Hope at a party. Bing became a surrogate father to him and was instrumental in getting him shifted from a hazardous RAF location to the U.S. Army Air Corps during World War II. Skitch worked on the *Philco Radio Show* with Bing and credits him with giving him the nickname "Skitch."

Nick Perito described his role in coming up with a new arrangement for "White Christmas" for Bing's later Christmas specials. Nick, a one-time accordion player, had made an accordion album for Coral before his bigger days as Perry Como's musical director. The instrument was held in low repute. At a meeting before a *Hollywood Palace* show, Bing jokingly asked Nick how much he would pay him to keep quiet about his knowledge of the Coral album. Nick was astonished that Bing had ever heard of the LP.

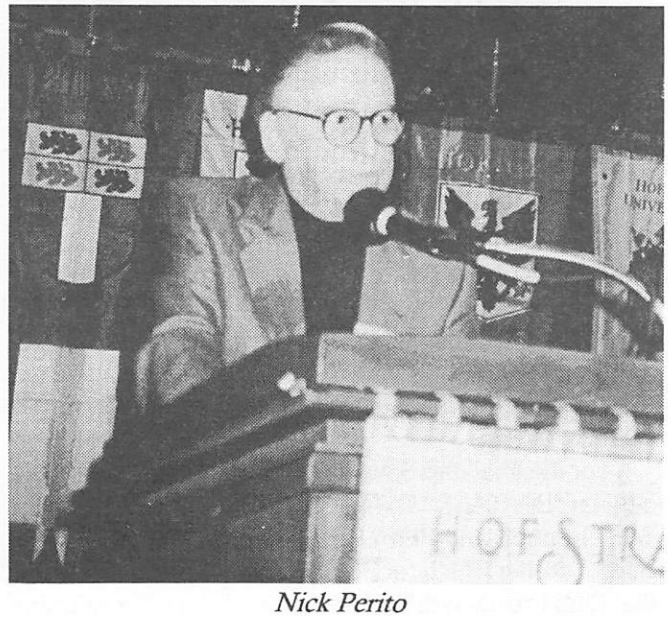
Buddy Bregman reiterated that "Bing Crosby was the finest man I ever worked with." **Ken Barnes,** while discussing the United Artists recording projects, told the story of a girl in the vocal group being worried about her mother's health and calling her immediately after one session. Bing walked over, took the phone and had a brief but charming chat with the mother. Assuredly, the mother then made a full recovery from whatever ailed her.

Gary Giddins gave the keynote address in which he pointed out some reasons why Bing's image declined over the years. Bing had such a cool, laid-back, relaxed image in the 1930s and the 40s that these qualities seemed grandfatherly in light of the Sinatra and Presley images. Also, the publication of *The Hollow Man* and Gary's *Going My Own Way* didn't help. While Bing gave an impression of being lazy, Gary reminded us that he made three movies a year, performed a one-hour live radio broadcast per week, made 40 records a year, performed benefits and played golf most every day. He was all business, early to bed and early to rise.

Concurrent panels followed the keynote address, one on "RADIO HOSTS AND BING CROSBY" that I did not attend and the aforementioned "BING AND FRED." Ava Astaire delighted the overflow audience with her talk about her Dad. The goddaughter of Randolph Scott, she has lived in Ireland for the past 30 years. She got to know Bing through his last recording sessions for United Artists. Her father took a lot of pride in his songwriting, but little is remembered of it. One of his best was "I'm Building Up To An Awful Letdown." Often asked who his favorite dancing partner was, Fred would usually evade the question by answering "Bing Crosby." In reality, Ava confided that he really thought his best partner was Rita Hayworth.

The luncheon panel was devoted to "REMEMBERING BING CROSBY." **Steven Crosby,** Gary's son, opined that "Do You Hear What I Hear?" and *Stagecoach* were his favorite Bing song and movie, respectively. He related an amusing story of being in college and having Bing ask him if he liked beer. When he responded affirmatively, Bing took him to the basement and gave him ten cases of Olympia to take back to school. Olympia was a big sponsor at Pebble Beach at the time and apparently inundated Bing with a supply. Steven said he was very popular back at school after returning from that trip.

Mozelle Seeger, Bing's accountant, read a long paper detailing her experiences with Bing, all of which readers of *Bingang* have previously heard. **Howard Crosby,** son of Ted Crosby, was raised in Spokane and was oblivious to the fact that Bing was a "big deal" in Hollywood until the family made a trip to



Nick Perito

Buddy Bregman

1974 while in Los Angeles working with Johnny Mercer. Bing had just come out of the hospital after his lung surgery, and Ken assumed that he was not able to sing. However, Bing's business manager assured him that this was not the case. Ken met with Bing, arranged a session in Los Angeles with Bing, Johnny Mercer and a rhythm section and then added orchestration in London. Bing flew over to London in February 1975 to complete the albums. Pete Moore wanted Bing in a booth, but he refused, saying that he was just an old band singer. Bing cut right through the 45-piece orchestra without a problem, something even Tom Jones was unable to do. Both the *That's What Life Is All About* and *At My Time In Life* sessions were cut.

Ken then paired Fred Astaire and Bing in the album *A Couple Of Song And Dance Men* and related the amusing stories of how he got Fred to come to London for the recording (by promising a second Astaire album of songs Fred had written) and how frustrated Fred was by not being able to rehearse extensively with Bing before the session. Bing, of course, had no need for such rehearsing. Ken produced three more albums with Bing and planned a future one with Bing and Bob Hope.

Joe Bushkin, who had just turned 86 prior to the conference, introduced a video clip of Bing's medley performed at Mysen, Norway on August 27, 1977. (Afterwards, I remarked to Ken about how Bing looked a good 10-15 years younger at that performance, but looked every bit his age in the October 11 photo for the *Seasons* album. Ken agreed and said he would not use that picture on a future CD reissue of the album.) **Ken Crossland** presented a talk about singer Michael Holliday, a Crosby sound-alike in Britain. **Graham Pascoe** presented an entertaining view of how Bing came to prominence "down under" in Australia. He pointed out that "Silent Night" and "Adeste Fideles" were better sellers there than "White Christmas," as most Australians at that time had never seen snow.

Due to the late start of the previous panel and the showing of the Mysen clip, the panel ran very late, and I was able to catch only a part of the subsequent panel, "BING CROSBY AND WORLD WAR II." I did hear two lady professors discuss their impressive independent research into obscure aspects of Crosby during the war years, apart from the entertainment business. Moderator **Gord Atkinson** closed the session by quoting his favorite parting words of Bing, "I love to whistle in the wildwood."

Concurrently, in the Student Center Theater, vocalist and broadcaster **Arne Fogel,** accompanied by **Dave Lalama** on the piano, performed some early Crosby songs, including "Out Of Nowhere" and "Once In A While."

A short supper break and it was time for "AN EVENING OF CROSBY FILMS AND VIDEOS" running some three hours. Film preservationist and Crosby enthusiast **Bob DeFlores** presented rare footage going all the way back to the Rhythm Boys. **Martin McQuade,** Curator of the exhibition *Crosbyana: Bing Diversity On Display* at the Hofstra Museum, showed a series of video clips from the 1954 *General Electric Bing Crosby Show, High Tor, The Edsel Show, The Bing Crosby Show* (sitcom), *The Hollywood Palace,* and others. This was followed by *The Legend Of Sleepy Hollow.*

Simultaneously, panels were held on "THE CROONERS" and "BING: INFLUENCES." The latter featured an entertaining tongue-in-cheek look at how hard it was to be a Jew in Bing Crosby's America. Professor **Joseph Dorinson** prepared a 16-page paper in which he jokingly commented on that difficulty as he discussed Bing's signature songs in a social context. He described the impact of Bing's performance of "Brother, Can You Spare A Dime?" on the Depression Era and Bing's ability

Ken Barnes

Joe Bushkin

WRITERS AND BING CROSBY." An informal panel discussion, I found interesting the answers by the panelists to the question of their favorite Crosby song. **Linda Emmett,** daughter of Irving Berlin, likes "Be Careful, It's My Heart." She told the amusing story of how devastated Irving was to write music for the 1930 film *Reaching For The Moon* (in which Bing's appearance is unbilled) and having all the music cut out except for the trivial "When The Folks High Up Do The Mean Low Down."

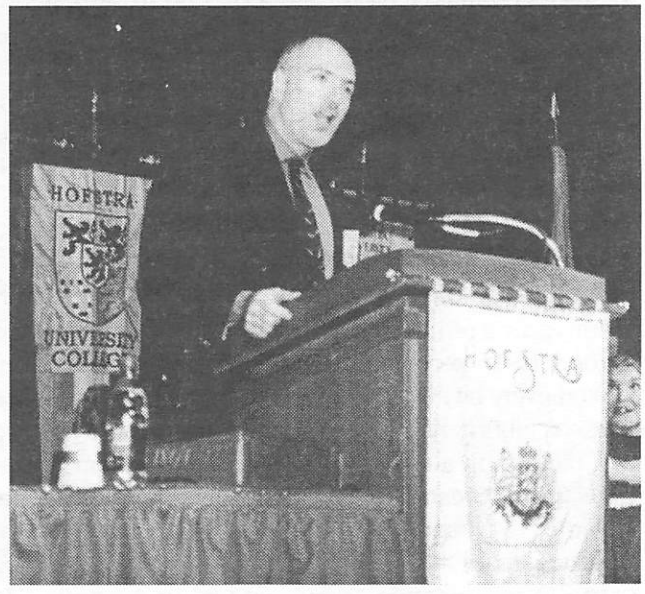
Rory Burke, daughter of Johnny Burke and goddaughter of Bing and Dixie (Lee is her middle name), loves the lightheartedness of "Swinging On A Star." She confided that she has two additional verses of the song that were never recorded. She said her father and Bing were very much like brothers (Irish kin). **Margaret Whiting,** not surprisingly, likes "My Ideal," which of course was a big hit for her. Bing recorded it for radio with Buddy Cole, and Pete Moore later added orchestration for its issuance on a three-LP set Ken Barnes produced for posthumous release. Margaret also likes "I Can't Escape From You." **Will Friedwald** made the point that Bing brought a fresh approach not only to new songs, but to old chestnuts, too. Songwriter **Ervin Drake** related that when Bing recorded "True Love," he had developed a slight quaver in his voice. The reason it doesn't show up on the recording is that producer Dave Kapp had it speeded up just enough to make it disappear.

A concurrent film panel. "BING AND AMERICAN CATHOLICISM," drew a much smaller group of perhaps 40 attendees. The tone was academic and in the portion I covered, a paper was presented dealing with "Analogies of Ignorance" in *Going My Way,* describing the intricacies of the theme of the film and its successor, *The Bells Of St. Mary's.*

We moved right along to lunch and the Buddy Bregman interview by **Gary Giddins.** Buddy was close to Gary Crosby and, in fact, arranged and backed several of Gary's Decca singles. With Verve, Buddy did the first two Ella Fitzgerald *Songbook* albums to high acclaim. After he did the *Bing Sings Whilst Bregman Swings* (titled by Norman Granz), Ella called him and said he did a better job with Bing than with her. Buddy responded, "Yes, but Ella, I was three months older." Despite having all-star jazz musicians on the record date, no solo space was given to them, as Buddy didn't want to cloud the issue, but just let Bing shine through the whole recording. Some reviewers thought Buddy was emulating Nelson Riddle on this session, but Buddy emphatically denies it and contends that he was just doing whatever sounded right. He is quite proud of that album, and it was played consistently in the background in the area of the registration table.

The afternoon brought on the "TRIBUTE TO ROSEMARY CLOONEY" in the Student Center Theater. This was introduced by a beautiful video clip presentation of Rosie singing on a 1966 *Hollywood Palace* show. She looked absolutely stunning in a yellow dress and with shorter hair than I remembered. **Margaret Whiting** spoke of the four-girl tour she made with Rosie, Helen O'Connell and Rose Marie. I was concerned that this tribute would lose sight of the focus on Bing, but **Joe Bushkin** immediately talked about performing with Rosie and Bing and **Ken Barnes** related the story of how the London Palladium concerts were recorded. **Gabriel Ferrer** pointed out that his mother learned from other singers — Bing first and Ella second. He also emphasized that Bing was always there when Rosie needed either a hand up or a handout.

I skipped a mid-afternoon panel devoted to "WHITE CHRISTMAS: THE SONG" in favor of attending "BING ABROAD — THE UNITED KINGDOM AND AUSTRALIA." **Ken Barnes** described his first encounter with Bing in



Will Friedwald

EVENING TRIBUNE

FINAL HOME

San Diego Sun - Established 1881 | Evening Tribune - Established 1895 | San Diego Daily Journal - Established 1944

Main 3841 | Published daily, except Sunday, by Union-Tribune Publishing Co. Entered as second-class matter at the postoffice at San Diego, California, under act of March 3, 1879. | 919 Second Avenue

No. 19179 | 26 PAGES | SAN DIEGO 12, CALIFORNIA, SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 1, 1952 | 10c. PER COPY

BING'S WIFE DIES OF CANCER

Crooner, 4 Sons At Her Bedside When End Comes

BEVERLY HILLS, Nov. 1 (AP)—Dixie Lee Crosby, the attractive 40-year-old wife of famed Bing Crosby, died of cancer today.

The former actress and musical comedy star had been in a coma since Tuesday.

Bing, her four sons and her father, E. E. Wyatt, were present when death came in their Beverly Hills home at 10 a. m. She became critically ill this week and doctors said earlier there was no chance for survival, but the family had refused to give up hope.

Becomes Roman Catholic

Larry Crosby, Bing's brother, said Mrs. Crosby, who became a Roman Catholic convert last Monday, "had been suffering from a generalized cancer condition which balked all attempts at alleviation.

"Immediate members of the family refused to give up hope until the very end and until every possibility had been explored," said Larry in a statement. "The family wishes to thank the many kind folks for their prayers and good wishes."

The family said hundreds of telegrams and letters had been received from well-wishers since it became known that she was critically ill.

MRS. BING CROSBY
Famous in own right

'Intention Always There'

Mrs. Crosby was received into the Roman Catholic Church last Monday, the day before she sank into a coma. Rt. Rev. Msgr. Patrick Concannon said he baptized her and that she had since received church sacraments, including Extreme Unction.

The Beverly Hills Church of the Good Shepherd, of which Msgr. Concannon is pastor, is the home parish of numerous Catholic film stars, including Crosby.

The priest said: "She had asked to be baptized many months ago. The intention has always been there."

Underwent Operation

Mrs. Crosby rallied sufficiently after a major operation a month ago for Bing to make a movie location trip to France. She had been in ill health several years.

When Bing returned by train from New York last Saturday, Dixie disregarded her doctor's orders, got out of bed, and met him at the depot in Los Angeles. As a result she had a relapse next day.

Born in Tennessee

Dixie Lee Crosby, a star of Broadway musical comedies and the screen in the late '20's, was born Wilma Wyatt in Harriman, Tenn., Nov. 4, 1911.

As a child she moved with her parents, Mr. and Mrs. E. E. Wyatt, to New Orleans. She attended the Sophie Wright school there. The family moved later to Chicago, where she went to Senn High School.

Wins Song Contest

A gifted singer and dancer, Petite and blonde, Dixie won a blues-singing contest at the College Inn in Chicago's Sherman House. This led to a singing engagement at the Lincoln Tavern in the same city. She adopted her new professional name, Dixie Lee.

On Broadway, at 17, she had a featured role during the entire run of the popular musical, "Good News," helping to popularize the song "Varsity Drag." Critics called her the stage's foremost southern blues singer.

Contract With Fox

A three-year contract with Fox Film Corp. came next, in 1928. She appeared first in "Fox Follies of 1929," then "Happy Days," "Cheer Up and Smile," "The Big Party," "Let's Go Places," and "Why Leave Home?"

Bing was a little-known singer with Gus Arnheim's band at the Cocoanut Grove, in Los Angeles' Ambassador Hotel, when he and Dixie met. She liked to recall a movie producer's telling her: "If you marry that Crosby character, you'll have to support him the rest of your life."

They were married Sept. 29, 1930, at Hollywood's Church of the Blessed Sacrament. Bing was 27, Dixie 18.

Gives Up Film Career

She made a few more movies—"Harmony at Home," 1930; "Manhattan Love Song," 1934, and "Love in Bloom" and "Redheads on Parade," 1935—and then left the screen.

She became the mother of four sons, who have been near her bedside the last several days of her illness.

Gary, 19, returned from Stanford University. Twins Dennis and Philip, 18, flew home from Washinton State College. Lindsay, 13, attends school here.

Bing's star rose in the years Dixie remained in the obscurity of motherhood. He developed into one of the world's most popular

(Continued on Next Page, Col. 7)

BING'S WIFE SUCCUMBS

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

entertainers. His successful business interests include the Crosby Foundation, managed by his brothers, Larry and Everett, and ranching, oil, manufacturing and sports interests.

Dixie was proud of her husband's success as a crooner and actor. Asked to sing at a party a few years ago, she quipped: "Nope, after I taught Bing to sing, I quit."

The Crosbys lived for years in the Toluca Lake district of the San Fernando Valley until their home burned. Then they moved to their present estate in Holmby Hills, near Beverly Hills.

They also have homes at Pebble Beach, Calif.; Hayden Lake, Ida., and their ranch at Elko, Nev.

Los Angeles Times

TUESDAY MORNING, NOVEMBER 4, 1952

Last Rites Held for Mrs. Crosby

600 Mourners Fill Church at Services for Singer's Wife

"When all the theaters have grown dark and the lights of all the marquees are out, the star of Dixie Lee Crosby will continue to shine high in the heavens—faithful mother, faithful wife!"

With these words, the celebration of a Solemn Requiem High Mass for the wife of Bing Crosby came to an end yesterday at the Church of the Good Shepherd in Beverly Hills.

The funeral sermon was spoken from the pulpit by the Rev. Frank Corkery, S.J., president of Gonzaga University, Spokane, and a Gonzaga classmate of the famous singer.

Church Overflows

He addressed a church filled to overflowing with more than 600 mourners. Outside on the lawns and sidewalks surrounding the church a crowd nearly as large milled behind police lines. Traffic was jammed on Santa Monica Blvd. A woman fainted.

The crowd began gathering in the bright morning sunlight long before the celebration of the 10 a.m. Mass was scheduled to begin. Old friends of the Crosbys, such as Bob Hope and his family, Dorothy Lamour, Director Leo McCarey and his family, Songwriter Johnny Mercer, Atty. Joe Scott and Restaurateur Dave Chasen were among the first to arrive.

Silver Bronze Casket

In solemn procession the silver bronze casket covered with a blanket of gardenias and white orchids was borne into the church, followed by the family.

Bing Crosby, his head bowed, his face drawn and etched with lines of grief, walked slowly behind the casket, one hand on the shoulder of one of his twin sons, Dennis, 18.

The other Crosby boys, Gary, 19, Phillip, 18, and Lindsay, 14, their blond heads bowed low, followed their father and brother. E. E. Wyatt, father of Mrs. Crosby was a step behind.

The marks of Crosby's week-long vigil at the bedside of his fatally stricken wife were on his face. His step was faltering. He was very thin and pale and his eyes were rimmed with weariness and grief.

Leans Heavily on Son

When he left the church after the celebration of the Mass, he leaned heavily on the shoulders of Lindsay, his youngest son.

Celebrant of the Mass was Msgr. Patrick J. Concannon, pastor of the Church of the Good Shepherd, who just a week ago received Dixie Lee Crosby into the Catholic Church and administered the last sacrament to

Turn to Page 2, Column 1

MRS. BING CROSBY

Continued from First Page

her. The voices of the Robert Mitchell Boys' Choir, a group that had appeared in a number of Crosby motion pictures, were lifted in the sacred Requiem songs.

During the sermon the car of a woman driver on Santa Monica Blvd., craning her neck to watch the proceedings, ran into the automobile ahead of her.

Police had barely finished unsnarling the wreck when Miss Roxanna Myatt, 1400 W 9th St., collapsed beside a tree in the churchyard.

Refuses Treatment

She refused medical treatment and was taken home.

Pallbearers at the funeral were Bob Crosby, brother of the singer; Dr. George Hummer, one of the physicians who cared for Mrs. Crosby in her last illness; Atty. John O'Melveny, Brent Metzler, a family friend; Songwriter Johnny Burke, and Joe Venuti, jazz violinist, whose friendship with Crosby dates back to the days when he and Bing were members of Paul Whiteman's orchestra.

Larry and Everett Crosby, brothers of the singer, stood in the background in the crowd. Other old friends present included Songwriter Jimmy McHugh, who acted as an usher; Actor Nick Stuart, who was starred opposite Dixie Lee in her first movie; Actors William Gargan and Jack Haley; Conductor John Scott Trotter and Announcer Ken Carpenter of Crosby's radio show; Producers William Pearlberg and George Seaton, and Don Hartman, production head at Paramount studio, where the Crosby films are made.

Closest Friend Abroad

Mrs. Alan Ladd, the former Sue Carol, who was Mrs. Crosby's closest friend, was unable to be present. She telephoned her condolences from London.

Mrs. Crosby, who would have been 41 years old today, died of cancer in the family home in Holmby Hills Saturday — five days after she had slipped into a coma. She had been in ill health for several months but rose from her sickbed to greet her husband on his return from Europe nine days ago. The next day she collapsed.

During the week in which she hung between life and death, some 12,000 persons from all over the world telegraphed and wrote the family, offering prayers and encouragement. The singer yesterday expressed his thanks to all these friends.

He asked that no flowers be sent for the funeral yesterday—that, instead, contributions be made to charitable institutions and causes. Nevertheless, the graveside in Holy Cross Cemetery was covered with wreaths and bouquets. Cunningham & O'Connor Mortuary was in charge of arrangements.

The City Council paid tribute to Mrs. Crosby in a resolution introduced by Councilman Ed J. Davenport and adjourned for the day in her memory.

AT FUNERAL SCENE—Miss Roxanna Myatt is assisted by Beverly Hills police officer after collapsing outside the church during funeral services for Dixie Lee Crosby.
Times photo

LAST RITES FOR MRS. CROSBY—Bing Crosby, center background, and his twin sons, Dennis, foreground, and Phillip, left, follow casket of Dixie Lee Crosby into Church of Good Shepherd in Beverly Hills. Other two Crosby sons are out of picture to the left.
(AP) Wirephoto

¡EL COMPADRE BING CROSBY!: THE LATÍN REPERTOIRE, PT. 6

by Edwin García, Esq.

Additional Research: Tim Morgereth, Mark Scrimger & Greg Van Beek:
Photos/sheet music covers: Mark Scrimger & Edwin García

■ MAMBO & CHACHACHA

Examined in previous articles, the first half of the 20th Century was a period in which Latín music genres were side dishes served alongside the established menu of dance styles such as waltzes, foxtrots, polkas, swing, etc. In the late 1950s, it became the main course and the foremost ballroom dance style. Previously in the 1920s, Harlem stride pianists had inserted *habanera* or *tango* bass patterns in their ragtime and jazz compositions. This merging of Jazz and Latín elements subsided. Decades later, it was renewed in experiments that developed the U.S.-Afro *bebop* and the Latín forms *mambo* and *bossa nova*. The latinized variant of bebop called *cubop* incorporated Latín percussion and rhythm. Mambo embraced the brass section scoring of U.S. Big Bands.

Even before the advent of *rock 'n roll* in the late '50s, the big band dance music of Bing's era was on the wane. After an approximate ten-year run, the eminent *swing* style that blossomed around 1935 was petering out as World War II ended. Coalescing in the late '40s, several factors led to this decline. (a) The rise of the jukebox industry and radio's increasing use of recordings reduced the need for live bands. (b) Economically, touring became unfeasible and led to downsizing of big bands to small combos. (c) As a consequence of the *1947 Musicians' Strike*, many bands folded. Yet, non-union Latín musicians prospered. (d) Wanting to be free from the ensemble constraints of stock dance arrangements, bored musicians yearned to express their individual creativity. Preferring the freedom of the combo format, they gravitated to the non-dance environs of small clubs.

(e) The Jazz fraternity splintered into two warring camps: the dixieland revival led by Louis Armstrong and the bebop movement of Charlie Parker and Dizzy Gillespie. New York City was the venue for musical experimentation. In Harlem, musicians jammed in after-hours clubs such as Minton's Playhouse and Monroe's Uptown House. They explored harmonic theory: improvising on the chords, rather than the melody. Devoid of an identifiable tune and employing very fast tempos, their creations were neither singable or danceable. Hence, the "danceable" music void was filled by *mambo* and *chachachá*. In a duet with Patti Andrews, Bing recorded the spoof *Be-Bop Spoken Here* in 1949.

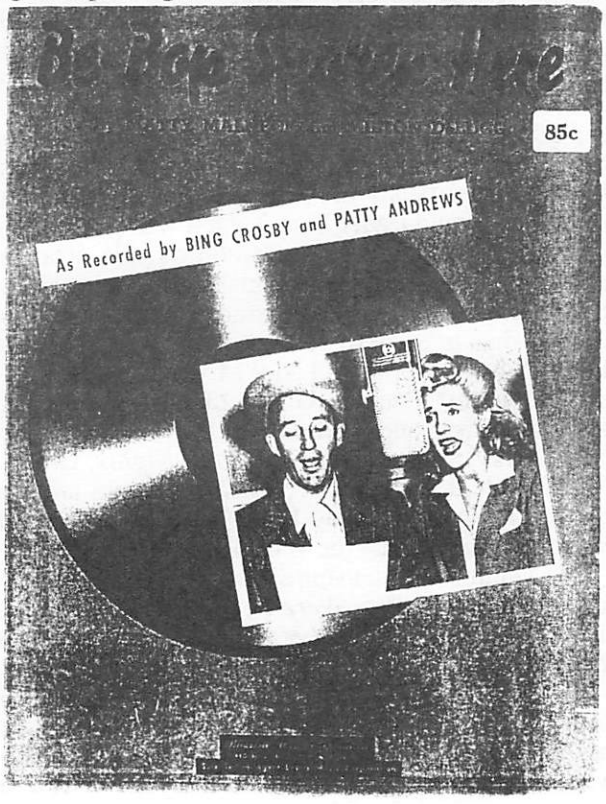
In the *Oxford Companion To Jazz* (Oxford University Press, Inc., 2000), contributing writer Gene Santoro notes the familiarity among Jazz and Latín musicians with the implicit exchange of musical ideas. A pioneer of Latín-Jazz fusions, Cuban musician Mario Bauza was a long-time music director for *Machito and His Afro-Cubans*. In 1937, Bauza became music director for Chick Webb; and later worked with Fletcher Henderson, Don Redman and Cab Calloway. On Bauza's recommendation, Cab hired Dizzy Gillespie. Many jazzmen such as Charlie Parker, Stan Getz, Dexter Gordon, Zoot Simms and Howard McGhee played with Machito's band. New York jazz clubs such as the Royal Roost and the Onyx lined "Swing Street"—52nd between 5th and 7th Avenues; while the mambo reigned at the Palladium Ballroom on 53rd St.

Reflecting the influence of these Latín-Jazz fusions, Crosby recorded two albums: the '58 *Fancy Meeting You Here* and the '60 *El Señor Bing*. As a predicate to reviewing these LPs, we take up a discussion of mambo and chachachá.

❖ Mambo

Many music historians have perpetuated the myth that big band dance music disappeared in the U.S. after the Swing Era ended. Not so. Large mambo bands played for huge crowds on both East and West coasts. They provided employment for competent Latín and non-Latín musicians.

Mambo is an Afro-Cuban syncopated dance in 4/4 time with a hip-rocking motion similar to the *rumba* but using forward and backward steps. Unlike most dances, the steps begin on the 4th beat. The term *mambo* is Congolese meaning "chant" or "dialogue." Instrumentally, it is a dialogue of contrasting riffs: setting trumpets against saxes or trombones, at times un-



der an instrumental solo. Though not improvised, it draws on the technical devices of jazz such as dissonance, polytonality and glissandos.

Historically, mambo evolved on three fronts: in Cuba, with Israel López and Arsenio Rodriguez; at New York's Palladium Ballroom, with the "big three" bands; and nationally, with Pérez Prado. Though many have taken bows for its invention, Israel "Cachao" López is credited with being the originator. In 1938 as arranger and bassist for the band *Arcaño y Sus Maravillas*, he introduced several rhythmic figures of mambo into his *danzones* compositions. Blind guitarist Arsenio Rodríguez developed the genre within his smaller *conjunto* ensemble.

By the late '40s, the dance infiltrated the upstate New York Catskill resort area. In the city, it made a home in '46 at the Palladium on 53rd and Broadway. Previously, the hall featured swing music. Eventually, the venue became the exclusive haven for the mambo bands of: Cuban Frank "Machito" Grillo; and Puerto Ricans Tito Puente and Tito Rodríguez. Their sound was boisterous, energetic, frenetic and dissonant.

Yet, despite the local success of the big three, Cuban pianist and band leader Damaso Pérez Prado was the mambo's chief popularizer in the U.S. A later record producer for Bing, band leader Sonny Burke, heard a Prado record while on holiday in México. He persuaded RCA Victor to release it for the mainstream U.S. market. Hence, Prado's first major impact came in '50 with his *Mambo Jambo*. In September '51, his band played a legendary gig at the Zenda Ballroom in Hollywood before a crowded dance floor. The success was similar to Benny Goodman's triumph on August 21, 1935 at the Palomar Ballroom in Los Angeles; an event many claim pivotal in the history of *swing*. Prado scored many instrumental chart hits. His sound included high-register trumpets and a tight five-piece rhythm unit. During section breaks, he urged on his musicians with a vocal, exhortative "ungh" shout. This trademark shout was so popular and pervasive that it inspired the novelty *Who Put The 'Ungh' In The Mambo?*

In his book *Latín Jazz: The First of the Fusions 1880s to Today* (Schirmer Books, 1999), author John Storm Roberts notes that mambo had strong jazz influences, specifically in the section writing and horn soloing. U.S. band leader Stan Kenton was particularly influential. With massive brass chords, his arrangements pitted screaming high-register trumpets against rolling bass trombones. Latín arrangers acknowledged a stylistic debt to Stan. In 1951, Kenton trumpeter Pete Candoli played in Prado's band. Moreover, noted Cuban saxophonist Paquito D'Rivera paid homage to Stan with a track titled "Mambo à la Kenton" for his 1999 Chesky Records LP *Tropicana Nights*. Crosby fans will note that Kenton recorded for Decca and his band had replaced Skinnay Ennis' on *The Bob Hope Pepsodent Show* during the World War II years.

Mambo mania inspired many novelty records: Vaughn Monroe's *They Were Doin' The Mambo*; Sophie Tucker's *Middle Aged Mambo*; Arthur Prysock's *Show Me How To Mambo*; Big John Greer's *We Wanna See Santa Do The Mambo*;Andrews Sisters' *The Mambo Man*; Ruth Brown's *Mambo Baby*; and Rosemary Clooney's *Mambo Italiano*. Interestingly, Clooney can be heard singing *I Only Have Eyes For You* in mambo rhythm on a current TV ad for a cholesterol medication. Also, the dance spawned two 1956 films: Dino D'Laurentis' Italian flick *Mambo*; and the Chinese production *Mambo Girl.*

Reviewed in a later section, the *El Señor Bing* LP was Bing's main attempt at the genre. Presently, we note three examples of the mambo creeping into Crosby's radio, TV and film work. Reaching #4 on the pop charts, Perry Como earned a million-selling record with **Papa Loves Mambo** in '54. Written the same year by Al Hoffman, Dick Manning and Bix Reichner, this 2/4 novelty was arguably the best known hit to emerge from the mambo era. On radio and TV, Crosby sang it for programmes similarly titled *The Bing Crosby Show*: (a) on 5 broadcasts of his '54-55 radio series; and (b) in medley form on a '60 ABC-TV special for Oldsmobile. On radio, the Buddy Cole trio provided their own "Prado shout." This radio track was refurbished and released commercially in '79 by producer Ken Barnes and arranger Pete Moore. The remake was enhanced by the addition of trumpet punctuations and a more prominent percussion section.

In Bing's film remake of Cole Porter's *Anything Goes* (Paramount '56), there is an early jazz dance scene in which the mambo beat is inserted for about twenty seconds of screen time. Mitzi Gaynor and the other dancers utter the Prado shout. Finally, there is also a very brief mambo dance scene midway through the '60 Columbia flick *Pepe*.

❖ Chachachá

A descendant of the *danzón*, the ***chachachá*** is called the "double mambo" sometimes since it added a double step (in the 4th to 1st beats) to the basic mambo step. Its onomatopoeic name refers to the feet stamping of the catchy triple 4th beat. The genre is generally in 2/4 metre; consists of an AB exposition, at times a mid-section vamp and a coda; has diatonic harmony; and little syncopation.

Cuban violinist Enrique Jorrín is credited with its creation in '50 via his compositions for the *Orquesta América*, a "charanga francesa" band. The distinctive ensemble of these *charanga* bands gave the form much of its sound: two violins, piano, flute, drum-bell, double bass and güiro. Timbales lead the percussion unit. Usually, only a solo singer is used when sung.

With the lighter flute and fiddle combo and simpler beat, it made an effective contrast to the mambo's denser brass and sax sound. And yet, the Cuban model was not always followed. New York bands such as Tito Puente's transcribed chachachá tunes for brass and reeds. Thus, they were refurbished with the typical mambo-oriented stabbing brass and rolling saxes. Nevertheless, the Cuban style left an impression on Jazz. The charanga-chachachá together with the jazz-bossa movement were responsible for the rise in popularity of the flute as a solo instrument in 1960s jazz. The most famous beneficiary was flautist Herbie Mann.

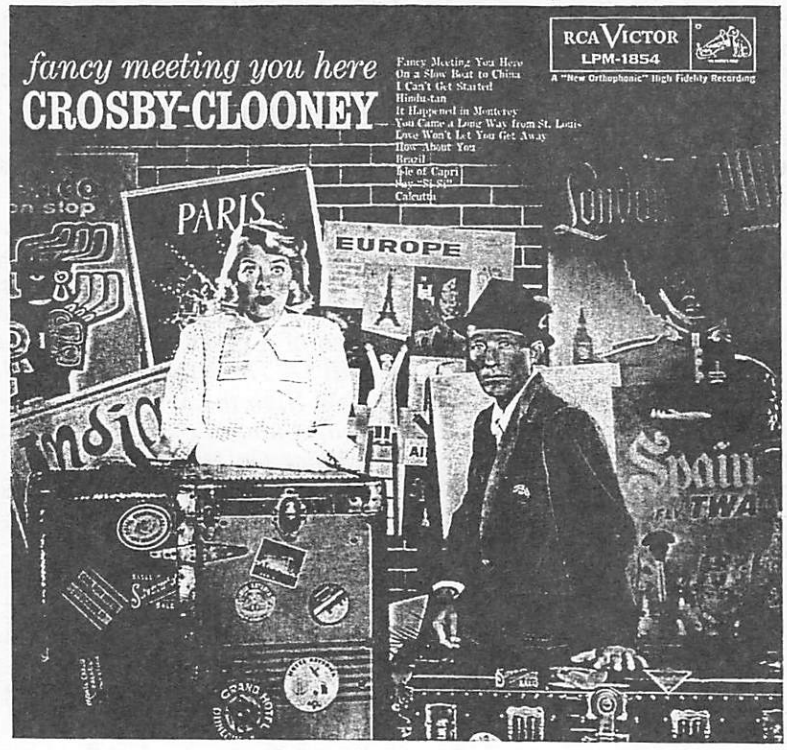
Arriving in the U.S. in '54, its simplicity was a hit with dancers for whom the mambo was overly demanding. The simpler beat lent itself to hybrids such as *Sweet and Gentle*, a mambo-chachachá hit for singer Georgia Gibbs in '55. In the same year, Pérez Prado had a huge hit with **Cherry Pink and Apple Blossom White** (Cerezo Rosa). Written in 1950 by Frenchmen

Luis Louiguy and Jacques Larue, the theme was used in the Jane Russell vehicle *Underwater!* (RKO '55). It was #1 for 10 weeks and in the Top 40 for a total of 26 weeks. Surprisingly, the tune was arranged in chachachá rhythm rather than the mambo for which Prado was known. Previously discussed (see Part IV), Bing sang Hal David's lyric version on a '60 *The Crosby-Clooney* radio show. The Buddy Cole trio provided a gentle *rumba* beat, with an extended midsection soloed alternately by electric guitar and keyboards.

Chachachá appeared in three Bing films; the last two made for 20th Century Fox. Reviewed previously (see Part IV), Louis Armstrong ended **High Society Calypso** with a chachachá coda in *High Society* (MGM '56). **Chico's Choo-Choo** was sung on screen by Debbie Reynolds and Robert Wagner for a night-club scene in the '59 flick *Say One For Me.* Propelled by a brass-led chachachá beat, this silly ditty by Jimmy Van Heusen and Sammy Cahn told the story of a Puerto Rican train engineer. At the time this song was written, no passenger trains existed in Puerto Rico. Incidentally, R&B singer Sam Cooke enjoyed a Top 40 hit in 1959 with *Everybody Likes To Cha Cha Cha.*

For the 1960 college caper *High Time*, Henry Mancini composed the instrumental **The Old College Try Cha-Cha**. The tune emanated from a phonograph-player during an early scene where Crosby's character meets his dorm-mates. Unfortunately, the screen dialogue and accompanying dancing obscures much of Mancini's sparkling melody. With orchestrations by Edward Powell, the soundtrack recording featured an even balance between the piano, brass and flute; the bongós in a prominent aural position. A flautist himself, Mancini must have relished composing for a genre in which the flute plays such a prominent part.

From the 1961 *Holiday in Europe* LP, Bing pleaded for **More 'n' More, Amor**. Though the Spanish spelling of "amor" is used, this is actually an Italian song by Alberto Testa. Obviously, the two syllable "amor" was a better fit with the melody line than the three syllable Italian form "amore." Bob Thompson's simple chachachá arrangement provides a contrast with Billy May's aggressive charts on the two albums to be discussed in the next upcoming sections. Before moving on, we conclude this section by recalling that there were several chachachá-bolero arrangements on the '75 *Bingo Viejo* LP (see Part III): **Cuando Calienta El Sol**; **Bésame Mucho**; and **La Borrachita**.



12 inch LP cover (RCA-Victor LPM-1854)

❖ **Fancy Meeting You Here**

At three sessions in July and August 1958, Bing recorded this duet album with Rosemary Clooney for RCA records. Happily, it has been issued at least three times on CD for the Taragon, BMG-Bluebird and RCA-Camden labels. Although not commonly thought of as a Latín album, six out of twelve songs incorporate Latín rhythms such as chachachá, rumba, samba and pasodoble; the balance in swing tempo. This concept LP was unified by a travelogue theme suggested by songwriters Jimmy Van Heusen and Sammy Cahn, creators of two of the songs and additional continuity lyrics. It served as an alternative to Frank Sinatra's #1 charting travelogue LP *Come Fly With Me*, released by Capitol in early 1958.

Indeed, both albums were arranged by Billy May, whom Bing referred to in the liner notes as "the Rabelais of the rolling bass, the Merry Maestro." In a radio interview late in his career, Sinatra used one word to describe him: drive, drive, drive! A former Charlie Barnet trumpeter, May gained success as an arranger with a slurping, *glissando* saxophone sound, spiced with brass punctuations. His 1939 arrangement of the tune "Cherokee" for Barnet is considered a precursor to the Be-bop sound. May's "chattering" call and response style was tongue-in-cheek, animated and at times playful. Here, the travelogue motif allows him to use a "Cugat-like" varied instrumental palette: marimba; tambourine; triangle; bongós; maracas; tom toms; gong; oboe; harp, xylophone, etc. Additionally, he has crafted a number of delightful charts with the following six tracks best described as Latín fusions.

In 1948, the Ray McKinley Orchestra garnered a hit for RCA Victor with composer John Brooks' blues **You Came A Long Way From St. Louis**. Written in 4/4, May has retained the R&B and garnished it with a pinch of chachachá. In addition to his original words, Bob Russell provided the counter lyric *You Can Take The Boy Out Of The Country* used by Bing as an echo counterpoint to Rosie's exposition of the main lyric. Bongós accentuate the rhythmic quality of the track. In the 1968 private recording *African Safari* (Tanzania), Crosby sang the parody "You Came A Long Way From Las Cruces."

In 1935, Cugat had a tango hit with Will Grosz and Jimmy Kennedy's **Isle of Capri**. Here, a strumming mandolin begins an arrangement which veers from a light pasodoble beat to a few measures of trumpet-led march tempo, and then on to swing. Specifically written for this LP, Jay Livingston and Ray Evans' **Calcutta** opens with a "snake charmer" oboe transporting us to India. Although mostly in swing tempo, we are treated to a few measures each of samba and march-style pasodoble.

The next trio were previously reviewed. *Para Vigo Me Voy* (Say Si Si) (Part IV), *Brazil* (Part V) and *It Happened In Monterey* (Part III) are arranged in an authentic Latín manner with brass punctuations and prominent bongós. And yet, even these numbers have their idiosyncrasies. **Say Si Si** has been treated with a boisterous rumba beat, and a few bars of pasodoble rhythm via a strumming guitar. The samba **Brazil** contains some swing measures. S.T. Gallagher's *Here We Are* (Face To Face Again) serves as prefix and suffix to Bob Russell's original English lyric. Foreshadowing its use on the *El Señor Bing* LP, May uses an odd pairing by setting flutes with trumpets for a few passages.

Reflecting the Latín fusion influence stated in prior sections, **It Happened In Monterey** is the most telling track on the album. Previously reviewed (Part III), this old 3/4 waltz has been converted into a 2/4 chachachá, resulting in an irregular rhythmic pulse. Two musical quotes reveal May's humor: (a) halfway through, the brass play a snatch of the Mexican tune *Mexican Hat Dance*; (b) a glissando trumpet wails underscoring the sung line "that Pérez Prado brass," reminiscent of trumpeter Billy Regis' solo on Prado's recording of *Cherry Pink and Apple Blossom White*. Also, a baritone sax ends the record with a single, sustained "burp" low note: a recurring device in Prado's recordings. Eventually, Clooney joined Prado for a recording session in 1962.

❖ **El Señor Bing**

On June 22-23, 1960, Crosby recorded this LP for his Project Records Co. and leased it to MGM. It comprised a mixed bag of authentic Latín songs, novelty items, film and show tunes. The creative, cover art depicted Bing's face in a cardboard cut-out with a Mexican sombrero, shawl and smoking pipe.

In part 4 of *The Crosby Collection, vols. 1-5* (John Joyce & Son, 1991-97), British author Fred Reynolds relates that there are some who consider this LP as the "nadir" of Bing's recording career. He devotes eleven pages focusing on vocal phrasing and song construction. Indicating indifference or lack of understanding, Reynolds does not mention that this is a collection of mambos and chachachás, two dance-oriented forms. Easily, it could have been titled "Mambo Bingo" or "Crosby's Chachachá." To view this as not being much of a vocalist's showcase misses the point. This is a dance album. As stated in the liner notes, the tunes are arranged as two-song medleys: increasing the tracks' duration for dancing. Moreover, Crosby only sings one chorus on each of the songs. In its approach, the LP harkens back to the Big Band dance era when the band was the main attraction and the vocalists contributed a "vocal refrain."

The mambo's stabbing trumpets and grunting saxes and the chachacha's flute and timbales thrust were geared toward the dancer. The frenetic drive of these rhythms don't allow much room for "vocalizing." Historically, most of the "singable" hits were very diluted, e.g. Perry Como's *Papa Loves Mambo* and his chachachá take on *Mandolins in the Moonlight*. The brass scoring on *Papa* is simple. Both were arranged with a prominent, yet light percussion.

For this LP, Billy May adopts a more authentic, boisterous sound: typical incessant percussion and blaring brass riffs on the mambos and faster than usual tempos on the chachachás. His brass writing reveals a busy and nervous quality. An oddity of his arrangements is in the mix of flutes and trumpets on all tracks. The usual trumpet-sax combo has been dropped. The charts follow a similar pattern: brass and percussion intros; louder passages played by brass, timbales, bongós and claves; softer parts use smooth sounding flutes and marimba. Trumpet punctuations weave around Bing's vocals while flutes support him. Additionally, a choir adds oohs and aahs on some of the tracks.

Crosby is in resplendent, resonant form with an unhurried, *legato* phrasing. However, his very forward-placed vocals reveal an uneven audio mix. Given the bombastic nature of the music, Bing appropriately sings louder than usual. Also, it sounds as if the volume on his voice was raised a tad. On some tracks, this can be jarring, e.g., *Marta*. Closer integration with the band would have produced a better audio mix.

With the asterisk indicating the brief appearance of a choir, the mambo pairings include: *In The Still Of The Night*/I Could Have Danced All Night; How High the Moon*/Old Devil Moon**; *Pagan Love Song/Cuban Love Song*; *C'est Magnifique/Taking A Chance On Love; Heavenly Night/My Shawl*. Briefly, this set consists of: (a) two Cole Porter songs—**In The Still Of The Night** and **C'est Magnifique**, the latter from his '53 musical *Can Can*; (b) from different productions between 1940-56, four show tunes—*I Could Have Danced All Night*, *How High The Moon*, **Old Devil Moon** and **Taking A Chance On Love**; (c) two MGM film novelties—*Pagan Love Song* and **Cuban Love Song** (see Part IV); and (d) two Latín tunes—*Heavenly Night* (see Part III) and **My Shawl** (see Part II). As shown, the last three were previously reviewed.

On two songs, we have a humorous wink on one and a nod to the beboppers on the other. With **I Could Have Danced All Night**, a flautist sneaks in a quote from the tune *Mexican Hat Dance*. Previously, May had a trumpeter do the same on "It Happened In Monterey" for the *Fancy Meeting You Here* LP. In *Swing To Bop* (Oxford University Press, 1985), author Ira Gitler relates the following anecdote. At the jazz club Kelly's Stable, singer-pianist Nat King Cole showed Dizzy Gillespie the chord changes to **How High The Moon**. It became the anthem of the boppers.

Originally a waltz, **Pagan Love Song** was sung on screen by Ramón Navarro in the same-titled '29 MGM film. Despite the Navarro connection, the song is not Latín since it refers to Tahiti. With **Heavenly Night**, we are treated to this seldom heard alternate English lyric for the Mexican standard *Cielito Lindo*. Neil Wilson wrote the words in 1923.

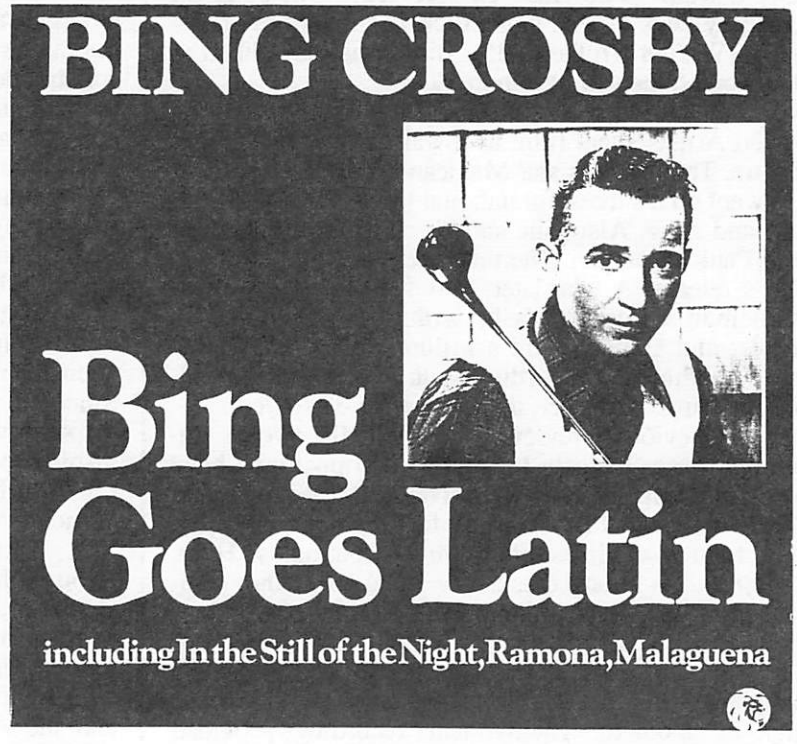
The chachachá tracks are: *Marta/The Rose In Her Hair*; *Down Argentina Way*/What A Difference A*

Alternate Album Covers For

El Señor Bing

Top: 1960 U.S. release (MGM E3890P)

R: Later British release (MGM 2354-028)



Using the Cyrillic alphabet, Russian language LP label of *El Señor Bing*. Released by MGM records.

*Day Made**; *Ramona*/Amapola**; *At The Crossroads* /The Breeze And I**; *Again*/Allez-Vous-En*. This list comprises: (a) three Cuban songs—**Marta** (see Part IV), *At The Crossroads* and *The Breeze And I*; (b) two Mexican tunes—**What A Difference A Day Made** (see Part III) and **Amapola** (see Part III & IV); (c) four film songs—*Again*, *Ramona*, **Down Argentina Way** (see Part V) and *The Rose In Her Hair*, the latter two by Harry Warren; and (d) another Cole Porter tune from *Can Can*—**Allez-Vous-En** (Go Away).

The words for **Again** were penned by Dorcas Cochran. He wrote the English lyric *I Get Ideas* for the remake of the tango classic *Adiós Muchachos*. Originally a waltz, **The Rose In Her Hair** was sung on screen by Dick Powell in the flick *The Broadway Gondolier* (Warner Brothers '35). Bing must have liked it. He recorded the song again in 1976.

Ramona was composed for the same titled '27 United Artists silent film, as a waltz for piano and orchestra. The movie's star Mexican beauty Dolores Del Río went on a successful national tour to promote both film and song. Also, she sang it on a radio broadcast with Paul Whiteman. The tune became a hit before the film's release. A year later, two #1 records emerged: Whiteman's initial smash, with Austin Young on vocals; and Gene Austin's million seller. Whiteman made another '28 recording with a vocal chorus including Bing. However, the takes were destroyed.

Previously reviewed (see Part II), two of Cuban composer Ernesto Lecuona's compositions have been paired up: **At The Crossroads** (Malagueña) and **The Breeze and I** (Andalucía). In Bing's art, both provide a study of different rhythmic treatments. Here, *Crossroads* is arranged as a chachachá. On radio, compare the semi-classical version of *Malagueña* by harmonica player Larry Adler on KMH. Crosby recorded *Andalucía* thrice: (a) here, a chachachá; (b) on the '65 Longines set, a pasodoble; and (c) on the '75 *Bingo Viejo* LP, a bolero. The two latter recordings provided rhythms more sympathetic to the vocals. Nevertheless, Bing delivered his usual warm tones on all three.

■ BOSSA NOVA

Excepting today's *salsa*, the Brazilian ***bossa nova*** was the last Latín music genre to sweep the U.S. Moreover, the Americanized *jazz-bossa* was the last jazz-based idiom to chart consistently in the Top 10. Developed in Rio de Janeiro in the late '50s, the form included: (a) rhythmic elements of samba; (b) breezy, highly syncopated guitar playing; (c) subdued vocals; (d) harmonic devices from the U.S. West Coast *cool jazz* sound—a smooth, restrained jazz style of the '50s that incorporated melodic and harmonic advances of Bebop; and (e) chord progressions and melodic intervals influenced by Brazilian classical musicians such as 20th century composer Heitor Villa-Lobos. It presented gentle, rippling melodies and glancing, oblique rhythms with a sophisticated and deceptive simplicity.

Regarding bossa's evolution, we are guided by authors Chris McGowan and Ricardo Pessanha's book *The Brazilian Sound* (Temple University Press, 1998). Bossa had many musical antecedents, especially in progressive samba-canção tunes written by Ary Barroso, Noel Rosa and Braguinha. Recorded by Bing (see Part V), Braguinha's *Copacabana* was recorded in '46 by singer Dick Farney. Arranged by Radamês Gnatalli, it reflected a suave and sophisticated piece that foreshadowed the bossa sound. Rio de Janeiro's famous neighborhood Copacabana was the center for this new musical vanguard. Also, the site was a hotbed for jazz fans. Indeed, Brazilians writers distinguish between *bossa nova* and *samba-jazz*. The rhythm usually came from samba. Occasionally *baião*, *bolero* and *marcha* were used and transformed by the bossa sensibility.

In its evolution, three men played a key role: composer Antonio Carlos Jobim, lyricist Vinícius de Moraes and guitarist João Gilberto. Jobim and de Moraes wrote many classic bossa songs. Jobim (1927-95) emerged as the genre's greatest composer. Arguably, bossa was born in 1956: the year Jobim and de Moraes collaborated on the musical play *Orfeu da Conceição*, as well as the song "Chega de Saudade." The latter was recorded in '58 by Gilberto. He plucked acoustic guitar chords in a syncopated style nicknamed *violão gago* (stammering guitar) and sang in an intimate, whispering manner. His rhythm was seen as a cool and slowed samba. In fact, he was creating bossa's new sound: a laid-back, vocally oriented music with richly chorded guitar and oblique rhythms. An approximate translation, *bossa nova* referred to this "new way" or "new fashion" of singing, playing and arranging songs. Since the rhythms originated in guitar patterns, bossa helped revive both the jazz and acoustic guitar via the inspired playing of Brazilians Gilberto, Baden Powell, Luiz Bonfá, Bola Sete, Oscar Castro-Neves, Laurindo Almeida and U.S. jazz guitarist Charlie Byrd.

In 1959, bossa captured the world spotlight through the French-Brazilian flick *Orfeu Negro* (Black Orpheus), the film adaptation of the play Jobim and de Moraes had worked on. It introduced Luiz Bonfá's lovely *Manhã de Carnaval* (Morning of Carnival); then winning the Cannes Film Festival Grand Prize and the Academy Award for Best Foreign Film. In

April 2000, Sony Pictures released a romantic comedy by Bruno Barreto starring Amy Irving titled *Bossa Nova*. The soundtrack featured the music of Jobim.

In the late 1930s and '40s, the influx of Latín rhythms into the U.S. had been aided greatly by the government-sponsored "Good Neighbor Policy." Similarly, the jazz-bossa movement owed much to the U.S. State Department. In Spring 1961, Charlie Byrd toured South America for the U.S. Information Service with Keter Betts and Buddy Deppenschmidt. They jammed with Brazilian musicians. Later in the year, Byrd played jazz-samba at the Show Boat club in Washington. Other jazzmen toured Brazil and were exposed to the new sound, among them: Kenny Dorham, Coleman Hawkins, Roy Eldridge, Zoot Sims, Dizzy Gillespie, Paul Winter and Herbie Mann.

In late '61, Capitol released the 1st bossa nova LP in the U.S.—an earlier effort by João Gilberto. Yet, the bossa craze began when Byrd and saxophonist Stan Getz made their Verve album *Jazz Samba* in April '62. On the LP, Jobim and Gilberto's "Desafinado" (Off-Key) became a huge hit. It spent 10 weeks in the Billboard Top 40 and climbed to #15; and earned Getz a Grammy for Best Solo Jazz Performance. As a whole, the LP shot to #1, staying on the charts for 70 weeks. It was really jazz-bossa rather than bossa nova. Another Jobim tune on the LP, **Samba de Uma Nota Só** (One Note Samba) was sung by Caterina Valente on a '65 *Hollywood Palace* ABC-TV show, with Bing contributing spoken responses. Incidentally, Frances Langford sang a bossa arranged chorus on Tony Hatch's **Call Me** for a '67 *Palace* show, in which Crosby and Don Ameche took part in a medley.

By mid-1962, bossa inspired LPs were made by many of the above-listed jazz musicians including: flautist Herbie Mann's *Do the Bossa Nova With Herbie Mann*; and saxophonist Paul Winter's *Jazz Meets the Bossa Nova*. As with prior Latín genres, the bossa craze generated its share of novelties: Elvis Presley's *Bossa Nova Baby* and Eydie Gormé's *Blame It On The Bossa Nova*. Adding a swing vocal styling, Ella Fitzgerald recorded a collection of Jobim songs.

In '64, Getz achieved greater success when he recorded an LP with Gilberto and João's wife, Astrud. With the first verse sung in Portuguese by João and subsequent verses in English by Astrud, their version of Jobim's **Garôta de Ipanema** (The Girl From Ipanema) was a #5 hit and a Grammy winner for best song. The LP climbed to #2, staying for 96 weeks on the pop charts; and won 4 Grammys including Best Album. Bing sang it in a medley on two TV specials: (a) '67 CBS *The Jackie Gleason Show*; and (b) '69 NBC *Bing & Carol-Together Again For The First Time.* The song's muse was a beautiful, tanned teenaged girl named Heloisa Eneida Pinto (now Pinheiro) who used to "sway so gently" past the Veloso bar on her way to Ipanema beach. Jobim and Vinícius were regulars at the bar. Norman Gimbel wrote the English lyric. On Febuary 24, 1967, Bing hosted a two-hour radio show beamed worldwide celebrating the 25th anniversary of the *Voice of America* programme. Featuring many stars, the assembled broadcast included Crosby speaking partly in Spanish and his interview with Jobim.

Examples of "bossa nova for crooners" include Perry Como's '66 RCA LP *Lightly Latín*; and two Reprise albums pairing Jobim with Frank Sinatra—the '67 *Francis Albert Sinatra & Antonio Carlos Jobim* and the '73 *Sinatra and Company.* Bing beat both to the punch. Previously reviewed (see Part V), **Come To The Mardi Gras** was sung by Crosby and Rosemary Clooney for the '64 LP *That Travelin' Two Beat*, in a dixieland-bossa nova chart by Billy May.

The next year, Bing recorded Hoagy Carmichael and Mitchell Parish's **The White World of Winter**. Arranged by Sonny Burke, the breezy, bossa beat complemented the jingle-jangle of sleigh bells. In November 1970, a similar bossa arrangement was used on the tune **A Time To Be Jolly**. Arranged by Les Brown for the same-titled Crosby LP, Jack Halloran and The Voices of Christmas provided choral support. Both of these Christmas tracks contained occasional fluttering flutes, tinkling triangle notes and a chorus. In the interim, Crosby recorded a '68 rumba-bossa nova version of the previously reviewed (see Part IV) **Para Vigo Me Voy** (Say Si Si).

In January 1975, Bing recorded an album of Southern songs for London Decca titled *A Southern Memoir.* Three tracks contain Latin rhythms arranged by jazz pianist-conductor Paul Smith: a few measures of rumba were inserted into *Way Down Yonder in New Orleans*; and the bossa nova-swing arrangements on **She Is The Sunshine Of Virginia** and **Cryin' For The Carolines**. Recorded in Geoff Milne's liner notes, Bing raved about Smith's unique rhythms. Probably, he was referring to the bossa beat. *Virginia* was written by Harry Carroll and Ballard MacDonald in 1916. Matching the cheerfulness of the lyric, the track uses a fast, breezy bossa tempo. Also, it features: an opening bongós pattern; smooth flute figures; strummed, scraping guitar chords; an extended midsection led by Paul's sparkling piano; and concluding with a swing rhythm flourish. Popularized by Guy Lombardo, *Carolines* was written by Harry Warren, Joe Young and

Sam Lewis for the film *Spring Is Here* (First National '30). In a clever pairing of rhythm with lyric, the laid-back bossa is used for the opening and closing verses regarding the sleepy-eyed Southern environs of the Carolines. Whereas, a bluesy-swing tempo is played for the contrasting midsection underscoring words referring to the bustle of the big city. For this and the next song, the bossa rhythm is conveyed mostly by the drummer's brush work

In July '75, Irving Berlin's **Change Partners** was recorded for the duet LP with Fred Astaire *A Couple Of Song And Dance Men.* Originally, it was sung by Astaire in the Fred and Ginger vehicle *Carefree* (RKO '38); and nominated for an Oscar. Arranger Pete Moore made the track more romantic with the use of lush-sounding strings. Moore also had a hand in the next tune taken from radio.

On two 1957-58 *Ford Road Shows*, Crosby sang the Gershwins' **I've Got A Crush On You** in swing tempo accompanied by the Buddy Cole trio. The instrumental midsection featured piano and electric guitar, still in swing. For the '79 Ken Barnes-Pete Moore commercial remake, a bossa beat was superimposed on this brief passage featuring a saxophone solo.

It's a wonder that Bing didn't record more songs in bossa nova rhythm. The genre's intimate, casual-sounding style was a perfect complement to his own laid-back singing approach.

ADIOS MUCHACHOS!

From that *Lady of Spain* to *The Girl From Ipanema*, there you have the highlights of Latín American music's periodic invigoration of American Pop and Bing Crosby's musical career. Probably, some titles have been overlooked. This is inevitable considering the vast output by Bing throughout his fifty-one year career. But, the preceding reviews cover the water-front. Certainly, there is plenty to fill up several compact discs. (Hint, hint!)

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(To be concluded in the next issue. . .NEXT UP: an Appendix—a select *Bing Crosby Latín American Songography*)

"Bing-ing Around"

By Pete Cakanic

THE "Bing Crosby and American Culture" Conference at Hofstra University, Long Island, in November was "very successful," the information office told us. Estimates are that more than 500 paid attendees participated in the three-day event. There were numerous newspaper articles about the event. The university is compiling the articles from a clipping service.

Hofstra will publish texts of the presentations that will be available in several years after clearances with all participants have been made.

Carmela Amari, Brooklyn, one of our youngest members (pictured here with Kathryn Crosby), told "Bing-ing Around": "I had a great time at Hofstra. I went to some panels and met many Bingers. The biggest thrill of all was meeting Kathryn Crosby. I can tell you this—she is a beautiful woman inside and out. She signed my program and my Bing T-shirt. I told her I grew up watching the Christmas specials, also that her husband was always handsome, which made her blush and say, 'Yes, he was!'"

Carmela Amari meets Kathryn Crosby at Hofstra

* * * *

Andy Rooney, the great *60 Minutes* commentator, also writes a news column. Several months ago he had a piece on nicknames of famous people called "Plenty Is In A Name" and wondered how life would have been for them, had they not been famously nicknamed. He did not mention Bing Crosby.

I wrote to Andy and asked how he could have missed one of the most famous nicknames of the 20th Century, "BING." How would radio announcements have sounded? "And now we bring you 15 minutes of "Harry Sings," or "It's Harry and Bob again in a Road film." Would the Germans picking up Armed Forces Radio have nicknamed him Der Harry instead of Der Bingle?

Andy responded in a short note: "Thank you for your good letter. I enjoyed it. I should have used Bing Crosby as one of the great names. I'm interested in your contention that he's been forgotten. Thinking about it, I have to agree, but I also think no one has been so forgotten as [Arthur] Godfrey. I don't know what quality it is that some people have that gives them permanent status in our national memory."

The reference to Godfrey is there because I reminded Andy in a letter to him several years ago that the media was virtually ignoring Bing, and he wrote a column saying, "In my lifetime I don't know anyone who was more popular than Bing Crosby." Then he proceeded to write an article about Arthur Godfrey.

* * * *

Ernest Sutkowski forwarded a stage bill of *Bing Cherries,,* the Bing Crosby musical that appeared in New York at 45th and 8th Avenues. Tickets were $65, including dinner. Ernie says, "A group of us attended. While the production was well-intended, I regret it was not very good, and it will not go anywhere."

While the major networks, CBS, NBC, and ABC, failed to pay tribute to Bing on the 25th anniversary of his death on October 14, National Public Radio did. Gary Giddins was interviewed and did his usual great job of talking about Bing—in this case how Bing revolutionized broadcasting with his insistence on recording his show and about his investment in tape.

It is interesting that the networks ignore Bing, since he was so instrumental in making all three of them big-time.

* * * *

A couple of top-of-the-line manufacturers have been using Bing to advertise their products. Quite a few times a day Bing warbles "Oh the weather outside is frightful. . .Let it snow, let it snow, let is snow." as a Lexus SUV glides around snow and ice.

And a high-end office chair maker uses a full page color photo of an executive-looking Bing in a pin stripe suit holding a document, pen in hand, and seated in a very expensive-looking Harter chair. A headline at the top of the page says, "I'm dreaming of a . . .Harter chair." In another line the ad states, "Seventy-five years of dedicated service to a single industry, now that's something to croon about."

It's nice to see top-of-the-line companies choose the top-of-the-line singer to help them sell their products.

* * * *

As per usual, Bing shows up for Christmas. My sister told me of seeing a Bing Santa Claus doll at a large furniture-hardware store in La Grange, IL. It's about two feet tall, Bing has a pipe in his hand and is in front of a microphone Ears are winged out, and the eyes are a glorious blue. Press a button and you hear Bing sing three different Christmas songs including "White Christmas." It was priced at about $40. Its box says it is part of a "Gemmy Pop Culture Series."

"Bing swings his microphone and turns his head side to side while crooning three classic songs." These words are atop a two-foot-high box housing a Bing-like doll. It says, "Bing sings 'I Wish You A Merry Christmas,' 'Santa Claus Is Coming To Town' and 'White Christmas.'" There is a nice biography of Bing on the back of the box. The sound is as good as that of a tape player. It is made in China and distributed by Gemmy Industries Corp., Irvine, TX. The Crosby HLC Properties Ltd. is listed. The price for the item in North Augusta, SC was $24.99. It was listed for $49.99 at an upscale Chicago suburb. If you cannot find this in your region, perhaps by checking with www.gemmy.com you will find one.

* * * *

An *Augusta* (GA) *Chronicle* item "In The Spotlight" asks, "So what's Santa Claus' favorite Christmas movie?" Tim Allen, who reprises his role as head of the North Pole in the *Santa Clause 2* film puts Bing Crosby and Rosemary Clooney's "White Christmas" and the quirky comedy "A Christmas Story" at the top of his list.

* * * *

PBS ran a Frank Sinatra special of duets from his TV show which ran from 1957 to 1960. He was in very good form singing duets with Ella Fitzgerald, Dinah Shore, and Peggy Lee. The hosts were Frank, Jr. and Tina and Nancy Sinatra. Frankie sounded in awe when he talked about Bing, noting that everyone singing today picked up something from Bing. Nancy said, "He wanted to be like Bing," and Tina added that "Bing put Dad under his wing and nurtured him in his early days." It was nice to hear the Sinatras speaking so kindly of Bing.

* * * *

As has been discussed on the Internet Museum Bulletin Board, there have been a lot of "Bing sightings" around Christmas this year..

For example, Deborah Norville's show, *Inside Edition*, had a feature on "White Christmas," the "best-selling record of all time."

Eye On America on CBS showed a GI in camouflage uniform pulling out a CD of Bing Crosby's *Merry Christmas* album.

Night Line had a spread on "White Christmas" with scenes including Bing Crosby and Irving Berlin.

Editor's Note: Many other "sightings" have been reported, and it is indeed a joy to note that Bing seems to have been especially popular this season. I even heard him on our local classical music station (the only radio station I ever listen to!). About 10:30 P.M. I woke up from a deep sleep to hear Bing singing "Let It Snow! Let It Snow! Let It Snow!" followed by the Bing/Bowie duet and a couple of other Bing Christmas songs. Last year I asked the station to play some Bing songs, but heard nothing except the usual slightly "operatic" versions of "White Christmas." Progress!!

* * * *

May I close by bidding a fond farewell to fellow *Bingang* contributor, Charlie Baillie. I met him several times. He was a tall, handsome man, almost ten years older than I am, but he had extraordinary energy in ferreting out all of those Bing CD's. He will be missed. He is irreplaceable. Thanks, Charlie, for all the help you've given us.

Pete Cakanic

Bing Crosby and His Forgotten Leading Ladies

The Mary Carlisle Story

By David Lobosco

MARY Carlisle, like so many other starlets before her and after her, is not remembered at all today. The images she left on screen are as faded as the scratchy sounds of a Gene Austin 78 rpm record, but Miss Carlisle should be remembered for her impeccable acting in many popular films of the 1930's, especially the three films she made with Bing Crosby.

I had the pleasure of interviewing Ms. Carlisle earlier this year. At the age of 90, she is active and opinionated. Although still very private, she said a few words about Bing Crosby, who was her favorite leading man.

Mary was born on February 3, 1912 in Boston, Massachusetts. When she was four years old her father died, and her mother brought her to live in Hollywood. Mary's uncle worked at Universal Studios, and she often ate at the studio commissary. To this day Mary remembers the studio as it was at that time: "I loved silent movies so much, and while visiting my uncle, I had the opportunity to meet and finally hear some of the great actors like Lon Chaney, Sr., Walter Brennan, Reginald Denny, Jean Hersholt, Marie Prevost, Fay Wray, and even Rudolph Valentino. When some of these stars opened their mouths to speak, though, I wished they had kept quiet."

One day at the Universal commissary, Mary was spotted by studio production head Carl Laemmle, Jr., and he gave her a screen test. Complications arose because of her age, and it was decided that she would finish school before pursuing an acting career. Ms. Carlisle told me: "My mother was not the normal stage mother. She wanted me to be rich, but she was hoping I'd marry a doctor and not become a star." It would not be until 1928 that Mary actively began auditioning for parts.

Mary's success in films did not come overnight. She frequently worked as a bit player before she began to catch on in the early thirties. Many of her early films are forgotten now, where she played a small part or second banana to the stars. Some of these forgotten movies included: *Night Court* (1932) with Anita Page, *It's In The Air* (1935) with Jack Benny, and *Tip-Off Girls* (1938) with Lloyd Nolan. Mary was constantly complaining about the roles she received. She was typecast as the cute college co-ed in most of her movies. Looking back, though, Ms. Carlisle laughs at those roles. "I made a lot of college films for a girl that never saw the inside of a college. I'll bet if I would have stayed in the business, they would have had me playing the college girl until I needed a cane or a walker."

Mary Carlisle and Bing Crosby

Her greatest success in movies came with the three films she made with Bing Crosby. The first movie was *College Humor* (1933), in which Bing introduced "Down The Old Ox Road" and "Learn To Croon." Almost 70 years later, Mary remembers her experience in that film: "Bing Crosby was new to films, I believe, but he showed me a lot about camera angles. I think he could have been a great director if he'd had the drive to be. At the time, they were still pinning his ears back, and he hated that. I saw him years later in the 1960's, and he still made fun of those ears to me. I enjoyed *College Humor* because it taught me the good and bad about this business. Bing Crosby was part of the good, and

Jack Oakie was part of the bad. Bing and Oakie were like night and day."

Her second film with Bing was *Double Or Nothing* in 1937. In the film Mary does not play a college co-ed, but a snooty rich socialite. Of the three films she made with Bing, this was her least favorite. "I didn't hate making this movie because of Bing, but because of my other co-stars. William Frawley was either drunk or hung over, and Martha Raye thought she was the Queen of Sheba. I remember Bing having to break us up once after Martha started yelling at me that I had stolen her lipstick."

"After Bing cooled us down he told us that he was glad he didn't have any daughters. My favorite scene of all my movies was in this one, when I got to do a comedic dance with Bing called 'All You Want To Do Is Dance.' That was the high point of my work in film."

Their third and final film together was *Dr. Rhythm* (1938). Mary does not recall much about this film, except that Bing played a policeman, but she remembers her other favorite co-star, Andy Devine.

Mary said: "Devine was such a sweet and gentle man. My son called him Uncle Andy, and we always saw each other on the holidays. When Andy passed away in the 1970's of leukemia, I think it was one of my great personal losses."

Mary also adds about Bing: "He wasn't as open as Andy Devine was, but Bing was a true professional. The only phone calls he would take on the set were from his wife Dixie, and I remember him dropping his wallet one day during rehearsals, and about six pictures of Dixie fell out."

"The last time I saw Bing was around 1970, and he joked with me that we should do another college musical. I told him I would if they would bring good music back. Bing Crosby was responsible for my happiest years in Hollywood."

In 1942 Mary married millionaire James Blakeley, and she quickly retired from films. The couple had a son in 1947, and for years Mary worked as a corporate manager of Elizabeth Arden Salons.

Mary would not talk about her husband or son, but she tells me that she had many happy years raising a family. I asked her what she does in her spare time now, and she remarked, "I attend all my friends' funerals." Her last public appearance was at the funeral of Douglas Fairbanks, Jr. in 2000.

At the age of 90, Mary Carlisle has no regrets about leaving Hollywood behind. By not only possessing good looks, but a great personality as well, Mary Carlisle was always a joy to see on the screen. Even though she may be one of Bing Crosby's forgotten leading ladies, her beauty and talent will forever be etched on film.

Whaddya Listenin' To?

By Mark Bialczak

©Syracuse Post-Standard, 2002.

●**Judy Schmid** of Syracuse submits: "Believe it or not, I've resurrected my interest in. . .**Bing Crosby.** Yes, this 'over-40' baby boomer has decided that radio stations that play the same oldies or the same album-oriented rock or the same top 40 pop has made her crazy, and she's looked through her old music to 'cleanse her palate.' While I'm truly a music lover of many genres, and growing up in the '60s and '70s and the era of the **Beatles, Beach Boys** and Woodstock, I've always been interested in earlier music of the 20th century. When I was a kid, my first 45 was 'Snoopy and the Red Baron.' But my first album? Bing Crosby's 'When Irish Eyes Are Smiling.' (And my second was 'The Best of **Spike Jones & His City Slickers,**' but that's another story). When 'experts' put together their most influential musicians of the 20th-century lists, they listed **Duke Ellington, Louis Armstrong, Elvis Presley, Frank Sinatra** — the same names over and over again, all wonderful talents. But Crosby was somehow overlooked, perhaps because people my age associate him as dull, selling orange juice or only being audible on radio at Christmas time. Crosby was quite the innovator when he arrived on the scene in 1926. He didn't 'belt' his songs like his predecessors but, using his unique baritone, truly sang the words to songs, helping define the American song. He recorded with Duke Ellington, Louis Armstrong, Frank Sinatra and other greats of the 20th century. His intimate timing and rhythm were remarkable, not to mention his relaxed style (in opposition to growling blues singers or operatic European-style singers of the '20s, '30s, and '40s). There's a terrific series of Crosby CDs being issued, called the Jonzo series out of England, which includes alternate takes. Comparing Crosby's voice of 1926 and his jazz stylings with his ethnic, pop songs and ballads of the later years of his 50-plus-year career really reinforces the notion that my peers, no matter what their musical tastes, might want to listen for themselves."

●**Mark Bialczak** responds: Judy, thanks so much for your sharp insight on Crosby's talent — and the tape you made me (with your liner notes included) to share your interest in Bing. Fun that you separately included "I Ain't Got Nobody" from 1939 with **Woody Herman** and "Just A Gigolo" from 1931. Take that, **Louis Prima,** and much later, **David Lee Roth.** Only when you look way, way back at the glorious history of music can you truly enjoy playing connect-the-dots between eras. When I was a teen or younger, I used to complain when my father kept his "fogy" station on the car radio, WNEW-AM in New York City, instead of my Top 40 WABC. Lo-and-behold, his music hooked me almost as much as my music, and I was listening to **Dave Brubeck** and **Stan Getz** in college along with **Steely Dan.** And I was able to see the thread.

●Individuals and groups can send "Whaddya Listenin' to?" lists for Bialczak's "Music Notes" column by e-mail to : <mbialczak@syracuse.com>, by fax to 470-2111, or by post to Mark Bialczak, *Syracuse Post-Standard,* P. O. Box 4915, Syracuse 13221.

Two Tributes To Bing Crosby

On The 25th Anniversary Of His Death

Forgotten Pioneer Of Pop

By Jesse Hamlin

©2002 by the *San Francisco Chronicle*..

ELVIS, whose iconic image is everywhere, got loads of ink on the 25th anniversary of his death in August. But let's not ignore the other towering artist who died the same year but has largely been forgotten — Bing Crosby. He pioneered the art of modern pop singing and became the world's first multimedia superstar before that tiresome phrase was coined.

Crosby died of a heart attack on a golf course near Madrid 25 years ago today, at 74, as he sauntered off the 18th green after an enjoyable round with three Spanish champs.

It seemed an apt exit for the famously laid-back crooner whose warm voice and unassuming image — the affable duffer with the pipe and the hat who sang "Gone Fishin'" in a lazy drawl — personified America in the 1930s and '40s, when he held sway over popular culture as no entertainer ever had.

A Jazz Age innovator who brought swing to popular song and was the first to master the use of the microphone, Crosby achieved unparalleled stardom on records, radio, and in films. He sold hundreds of millions of recordings during his long career, with a record 38 No. 1 hits, (the Beatles had 25, Elvis, 18), among them "White Christmas," the best-selling single of all time until Elton John's maudlin "Candle In The Wind." *(Ed. note: This claim has been disproved.)*

"Bing dominated music because he created the art of intimate singing," Tony Bennett, the great jazz-based vocalist, said in a *Chronicle* interview last year. "His singing, his whole personality, had a nonchalant, tossed-off quality. He had that self-mocking quality that appealed to people. He and Louis Armstrong created the musical style of our time. It was all about relaxing and being a good neighbor."

Bennett is one of innumerable singers who, consciously or not, have been influenced by Crosby, whose conversational style was tailored to the then-new technology of the microphone. They range from Sinatra and Billy Eckstein to Ray Charles and Elvis, who recorded a bunch of Crosby hits like "Blue Hawaii." Bing also bankrolled the development of tape-recorded music, which transformed the industry.

"When Crosby came of age, most successful male singers were effeminate tenors, and recording artists were encouraged to be bland, the better to sell sheet music," wrote Gary Giddins in the first book of his two-

volume biography, *Bing Crosby: A Pocketful Of Dreams,* published last year. "The term 'pop singer' didn't exist; it was coined in large measure to describe a breed he invented."

Crosby, Giddins writes, "was the first white singer to absorb the swing and spontaneity of Armstrong's music. In 1936, Crosby had achieved such clout he was producing his own movies and gave Armstrong star billing in his *Pennies From Heaven,* a first for a black artist in Hollywood.

Crosby, who in his later years lived in Hillsborough, CA was first known as one of the scat-singing Rhythm Boys in Paul's Whiteman's Orchestra in the late '20s, a jazz-mad kid who boozed his way through Prohibition. His startling solo records on Brunswick in the early '30s made him a star. Over the next two decades, he recorded hit after hit on Decca, singing everything from jazz to cowboy songs and Irish ditties with the melodic grace and natural feeling that spelled *Bing.*

Crosby introduced a slew of songs that became standards—often written for him to sing in films—among them "What's New?," "Soon," and "But Beautiful." These records still sound good. So do swinging things like "I'm An Old Cowhand" with Jimmy Dorsey's band and Bing's "Bob White" duet with Connee Boswell.

Crosby was the voice of optimism and calm during the Depression and World War II, when an estimated 50 million Americans listened to his Kraft Music Hall radio show. He was also big in the movies, winning an Oscar for his portrayal of a priest in *Going My Way* and

making a series of classic "Road" comedies with his chum Bob Hope.

He was eclipsed by Sinatra and Elvis' rock 'n' roll revolution in the '50s, but he continued to record and appear on TV and occasionally in films. He also presided over the so-called Crosby Clambake, the Pebble Beach celebrity pro-am golf tournament he'd founded to raise money for charity.

After his death, Crosby's reputation quickly faded. In the liner notes to his 1994 Crosby tribute CD, singer Mel Tormé wrote that Crosby was "the forgotten man" in the world of music. Giddins' book has stirred up some interest in the man whose art still swings on a star.

Bing's Rich Voice Enchanted All

By Frederick N. Rasmussen

©2002 by the *Baltimore Sun*

IN all of the hoopla surrounding the 25th anniversary of Elvis Presley's death (has it really ever ended?), the death of Bing Crosby, a few weeks later in 1977, has seemingly been forgotten.

Crosby, one of the most popular entertainers of the 20th century, recorded more than 1,700 songs for Decca and sold more than 300 million records during his 50-year career.

He also appeared in such movies as *The Big Broadcast of 1932, The Big Broadcast of 1936, The Bells of St. Mary's, Holiday Inn,* and *Going My Way,* for which he won the Academy Award for Best Actor, and was a fixture on network radio and television for years.

Perhaps his most successful films were the *Road* comedies — *The Road To Zanzibar* and *The Road To Singapore* [and others] with Bob Hope and Dorothy Lamour.

"He will be remembered as one of the best-loved and mostly highly-respected figures in theatrical history," said William S. Paley, CBS chairman, at Crosby's death on October 14, 1977.

Crosby, whom Paley signed to a national radio contract in 1931 after hearing his rendition of "I Surrender, Dear" was playing golf in Spain when he suffered a fatal heart attack. He was 74.

He was gifted with a smooth, rich, mellow baritone and an uncanny vocal agility with lyrics.

"Bing Crosby's voice was like gold being poured out of a cup," observed Louis Armstrong.

Throughout his life, Crosby was identified with what became his theme song, "Where The Blue Of The Night Meets The Gold Of The Day." He also was known for his scat singing and his bub-bub-bub-boing, which delighted both audiences and impersonators.

He was born Harry Lillis Crosby in Tacoma, WA, the son of a bookkeeper. He acquired his nickname from a comic strip, "The Bingville Bugle," that he spent hours reading as a child. His family, noting his fondness for the strip, began calling him Bingo and later dropped the "o."

While attending Gonzaga University, Crosby played drums in a student band, influenced heavily by Armstrong, Bessie Smith, Al Jolson and Bix Beiderbecke.

In 1925, he and Al Rinker, the band's piano player, left college and headed for Los Angeles, where they formed a new act, Two Boys and a Piano.

The great orchestra leader, Paul Whiteman, hired the act in 1927 after hearing a performance at the Metropolitan Theater in Los Angeles. They were later joined by Harry Barris and were renamed The Rhythm Boys, touring on the Keith Orpheum vaudeville circuit and later appearing in Whiteman's movie, *King of Jazz.*

After leaving Whiteman, the trio continued playing West Coast clubs, and Crosby made his radio debut in 1931 singing with Gus Arnheim's Orchestra at the Coconut Grove.

They proved to be so popular on the radio that when he played the Paramount Theater in New York in 1932, he did so for 20 consecutive weeks.

Crosby lent a deft touch to a song and was able to make listeners understand and believe in the lyrics.

"I think that every man who listens to my records or hears me on the radio believes firmly that he sings as well as I do. I have none of the mannerisms of a trained singer. If I've achieved any success it's because I've managed to keep that kind of naturalness in my style, the phrasing which any Joe Doakes possesses," wrote Crosby in his 1952 autobiography, *Call Me Lucky.*

"Bing Crosby changed the rules of the game. He was the first American popular singer to relax — and by doing so he affected thousands of vocalists to come. A generation or two of young men wooed their girlfriends differently because of him, imitating his straightforward, easy sincerity," said the *Evening Sun.*

"And without intending to do so, he gently folded over the social fabric of America so the black and white ways of making music began to touch," said the newspaper.

1955 BING CROSBY INTERVIEW RECORD

Time: 7 min., 35 sec.

QUESTIONS

DISC JOCKEY:

1. Well, Bing, we can't tell you how wonderful it is to have you drop in on our show like this. There are so many questions, I wouldn't know where to begin. However, I know your time is limited, so we'll just have to limit the questions. Bing, we all know of the great days spent with the Whiteman band and the Rhythm Boys. Just when was it that you first started singing as a soloist? (Answer given on Band #1.)

2. Bing, we know that your voice has been heard by more people than any other human voice. Most of it has been over radio and through records. Can you remember how you got into the record business and what was the first record? (Answer given on Band #2).

3. If I had to choose a favorite Bing Crosby record I wouldn't know where to begin. Bing, do you have any special favorites? (Answer given on Band #3.)

4. I certainly want to say something about the wonderful movies that you've made. Like your records, there have been so many great ones a guy just doesn't know where to begin. Do you have plans for making more movies where you do straight dramatic acting? Say like "The Country Girl." (Answer given on Band #4.)

5. Just to get away from the show business kick for a moment, we've all heard so much about your ranch out at Elko, Nevada. I wonder if you could tell the folks a little bit about it. (Answer given on Band #5.)

6. It sure sounds great, Bing. Getting back to the records, your new album "Old Masters" is certainly a record fan's dream. Wonder if you could tell us a little more about some of the songs on it? (Answer given on Band #6.)

7. Well, Bing, it's been a real thrill for me, and I know my listeners feel the same way. Before we sign off here, could you tell us what your current plans are? (Answer given on Band #7.)

(Editor's Note: These are the questions asked by the disc jockeys to Bing when they used the 1955 Decca interview record described on pages 39-40 of the Summer 2002 issue of *Bingang*. Greg Van Beek supplied this to us, and our thanks go to him. The original was printed on 8 1/2 by 11 inch paper with black and red decorations at the top, sides and bottom as shown in the previous article. The text is in all capital letters (probably mimeographed). We did not feel that the original would reproduce well, so the type has been reset and reformulated.)

Bing (Is Still) On The Air

By Greg Van Beek

I just heard from member Perry Huntoon of Naperville, IL. He sent me the following information for the "Bing (Is Still) On The Air" series.

"An addition to your list should be the one-hour, weekly *Swing Chronicles* hosted by Charlie McIntosh, broadcast on Wednesday evenings at 9:00 p.m. over WUWF, 88.1 FM, Pensacola, FL and suitable for syndication nationally.

"Charlie has just completed program No. 100. His format is simple: He started with January, 1930 and is working his way up through the years with the top popular and jazz recordings of the period. He is currently up to May, 1933. Program No. 97 featured Bing's "Learn To Croon" while Program No. 93 featured "You're Getting To Be A Habit With Me," backed by Guy Lombardo, and "Here Is My Heart, backed by the Dorsey Brothers.

"Charlie frequently interrupts the continuity with special tribute programs to recently-deceased artists (e.g. Rosemary Clooney) or centennial births (performers and composers).

"It is a great show and a wonderful showcase for Crosby, as this was his heyday and he is featured extensively.

"I am a member of the Browsers, a Chicago-based group of guys who had a weekly one-hour big band and nostalgia radio program for 22 years syndicated by ABC Radio Networks up until last November. We have provided Charlie with some of his material, so he sends us copies of his program on CD."

FROM OUR ARCHIVES

I Found Bing Crosby Trying To Dry His Son's Socks

Mae Pace never expected to meet Bing Crosby the day she took her nephews panning for gold in a Colorado mountain stream.

"It was one of the great moments of my life," said Mrs. Pace, 64, of London, KY, recalling the occasion in 1965.

Mrs. Pace had taken her two great-nephews to pan for gold at a mountain tourist attraction at Black Hawk, Colorado.

"By chance we came across this man wearing baggy pants and a big buckled belt. I got the shock of my life when I realized it was Bing Crosby. He'd been filming *Stagecoach* at nearby Boulder and took the day off to go prospecting with his son Harry, who was 7 at the time.

"I was astonished to see Bing wringing out Harry's socks in his hands. Apparently Harry had got his feet wet in the stream and Bing was trying to dry the socks. He whirled Harry's socks around his head — just for me. He made a great thing of it. I never expected a star of such fame to do such things. For 15 minutes we just had fun." — *National Enquirer*, March 31, 1974.

Celebrate the Talent of Bing Crosby

By Judy Schmid

(Editor's Note: This article was originally printed in the October 2002 issue of *Prime For Senior Citizens*, ©2002 by Eagle Newspapers Publications, Syracuse, NY. It has been slightly revised and updated for reprinting in *Bingang.)*

HE left us 25 years ago this past October, having just won a golf match on a course in Spain. Not a young man at the time of his death, his passing nevertheless made headlines across the globe. Without a cult following, his image is rarely seen and his voice is rarely heard except at Christmas — but here are a few statistics (as pointed out by Gary Giddins) that might assist you in bringing him back into focus:

✦ He was the first full-time vocalist ever signed to an orchestra.

✦ He made more studio recordings than any other singer in history.

✦ He made the most popular record ever, "White Christmas," the only single to make American pop charts twenty times, every year but one between 1942 and 1952. In 1998, after a long absence, his 1947 version hit the charts in Britain.

✦ Between 1927 and 1962 he scored 368 charted records under his own name, plus 28 as a vocalist with various bandleaders, for a total of 396. No one else has come close: compare Paul Whiteman (220), Frank Sinatra (209), Elvis Presley (149), Glenn Miller (129), Nat "King" Cole (118), Louis Armstrong (85), the Beatles (68).

✦ He scored the most number one hits ever, 38, compared with 24 by the Beatles and 18 by Presley.

✦ In 1960 he received a platinum record as First Citizen of the Record Industry for having sold 200 million discs, a number that doubled by 1980.

✦ Between 1915 and 1980 he was the only motion-picture star to rank as the number one box-office attraction five times (1944-58). Between 1934 and 1954 he scored in the top ten 15 times.

✦ *Going My Way* was the highest-grossing film in the history of Paramount Pictures until 1947. *The Bells Of St. Mary's* was the highest-grossing film in the history of RKO Pictures until 1947.

✦ He was nominated for an Academy Award for best actor three times and won for *Going My Way.*

✦ He appeared on approximately 4,000 radio broadcasts, nearly 3400 of them his own programs, and single-handedly changed radio from a live-performance to a canned or recorded medium by presenting, in 1946, the first transcribed network show on WABC — thereby making that also-ran network a major force.

✦ He financed and popularized the development of tape, revolutionizing the recording industry.

✦ He created the first and longest-running celebrity pro-am golf championship, playing host for 35 years, raising millions for charity, and was the central figure in the development of the Del Mar racetrack in California.

✦ He made the largest number of V-discs and army broadcasts of any American entertainer and raised $14.5 million in war bonds. A *Yank* magazine poll declared him the individual who had done more for GI morale during World War II.

OCTOBER 14, 2002, was the 25th anniversary of the passing of Bing Crosby. While his death didn't "rock the world" as the death of Elvis Presley did, his legacy of musicianship, laughter, charity, and wise investments, with perfect timing, are still with us.

Many people aren't aware that Bing invested $50,000 (a hefty sum in 1946!) to develop audio tape and the machines that would record it. His business venture, Bing Crosby Enterprises, sold the tape technology a few years later to 3M and the machine to Ampex Corporation. Bing invested heavily in frozen orange juice — Many of us are quite aware of that bit of information — but his investment took a tasteless experiment foisted on WWII soldiers and sailors into the common household grocery item of good taste and high nutrition that we take for granted today.

Bing's active participation as an entertainer on the homefront and overseas during World War II raised hundreds of thousands of dollars in bond sales. Every male singer in the public eye between 1935 and 1955 — and some even after that! — based their musical style on his. Contemporary artists such as Diana Krall, Harry Connick, Jr., and Michael Feinstein cite him as an influence.

Bing's effect on American popular culture was studied this past November 14 through 16 at Hofstra University on Long Island. [Editor's note: See the articles about this conference in this issue of *Bingang.*]

Mark your calendars for the weekend of May 16-18, 2003, when Gonzaga University in Spokane, Washington — Bing Crosby's alma mater — commemorates the Crosby Centenary. Watch their website for more information:<www.gonzaga.edu>,

If you are interested in more information about Bing Crosby, his life, his musicianship, and his legacy, visit: <www.kcmetro.edu/~crosby/>, and check the various links at the bottom of the home page.

THE "IDEA" IDEA
THE STORY OF FANCHON AND MARCO

Shortly after Bing and Al Rinker arrived in Los Angeles seeking jobs as entertainers, Mildred Bailey, Al's sister, saw an ad in the newspaper saying that the producers Fanchon and Marco were booking acts for a revue that would tour West Coast theatres. The duo auditioned and were signed to appear for thirteen weeks in a production called "Syncopation Ideas" starting in late December, 1925. For the rest of his life, Bing marked this hiring as the start of his professional show business career. The following excerpt from the book, *The Golden Age of The Movie Palace*, by Ben M. Hall gives a glimpse of what working on this circuit was like and also introduces his bosses, the brother and sister producing team of Fanchon and Marco Wolf whose names are forever linked with Crosby's. M.S.

Week Starting Saturday, February 13, 1926

UNIT ONE:
INTERMISSION
"JUST BECAUSE I LOVE YOU".....*Arranged by Roesner*

UNIT TWO:
Educational Pictures present
AL. ST. JOHN in "LIVE COWARDS"
Jack White's "Mermaid Comedy"

UNIT THREE:
STRANGE HAPPENINGS CAUGHT BY THE CAMERA
from *International* and *Kinograms*

UNIT FOUR:
"Everybody's Talking About Him"
WALT ROESNER and the SUPER-SOLOISTS
(*a*) Selections from "CARMEN".....*Bizet*
(*b*) "THE WIND BLEW THRU HIS WHISKERS".....*Conrad*

UNIT FIVE:
A West Coast Theatres presentation
"SYNCOPATION IDEAS"
An "*Idea*" staged by Fanchon & Marco
with the following cast:
Crosby and Rinker, Bobby Thompson and Doreen Wilde,
Dan Payne, Mac Curry, Mabel Hollis and the 16 Lightning
Flashes—Fanchon's own Steppers

UNIT SIX:
"TOPICS OF THE DAY"
Compiled by *Literary Digest*

UNIT SEVEN:
Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer present
the *Cosmopolitan Production* of
VICENTE BLASCO IBANEZ'
dramatic novel
"THE TORRENT"
Directed by Monta Bell
Scenario by Dorothy Farnum

Don Rafael Brull	Ricardo Cortez
Leonora Brunno	Greta Garbo
Remedios	Gertrude Olmstead
Dr. Brunno	Edward Connelly
Cupido	Lucien Littlefield
Dona Bernarda Brull	Martha Mattox
Dona Pipa	Lucy Beaumont
King of Spain	Mario Carillo
Don Andreas	Tully Marshall
Don Mateos	Mack Swain
Salvatti	Arthur Edmund Carew
Isabella	Lillian Leighton
Russian Duke	Maurice Kains

Mama Wolf would sound reveille at 5:00 A.M. in their home in Los Angeles so that little Fanchon and her brothers Mark (later latinized into Marco) and Rube could have a full day to practice their music and dancing. By the time they were in their teens, Fanchon and Marco were a success as a ballroom dance team in West Coast theatres. As the finale of their act, Marco would play the violin with Fanchon perched daintily on his shoulder as they exited picturesquely.

Around 1919 they began to produce revues, the first being called simply *The Fanchon & Marco Revue*. In 1921, spurred by local success, they produced a show called *Sunkist* and set out to tour the country. Upon returning to California, Fanchon and Marco came up with an idea – an idea that was to spawn thousands of other "Ideas" for the next fifteen years. Why not, they reasoned, produce stage shows for movie theatres that would tour the country on a rotating basis and present, each week, a show far more lavish than a theatre could put together with local talent and local budget? Marco got busy lining up theatres on the Coast, Miss Fanchon (she was known thus by all who worked with and for her) hustled together the girls who had worked in the chorus of *Sunkist*, brother Rube Wolf assembled an orchestra, and the first Fanchon & Marco "Idea" was born.

BING AL
CROSBY & RINKER

An "Idea" in the Fanchon & Marco sense of the word was never just a vague mental image but a concrete and distinctly salable commodity. One Idea made a week, fifty-two Ideas made a year, and that was the calendar they went by all during the Twenties and into the Thirties.

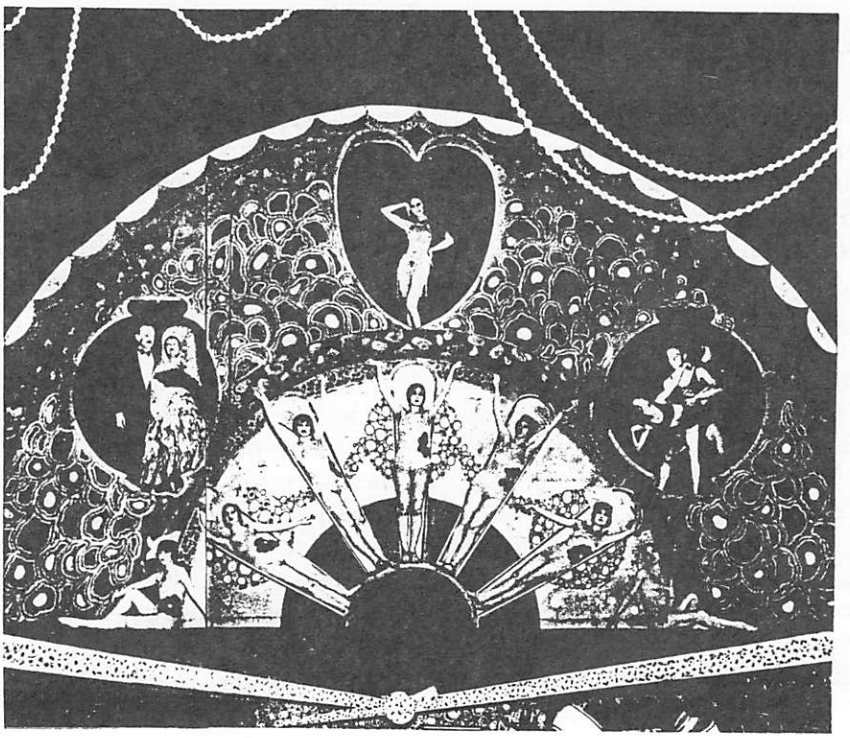
The Ideas were for the masses. They brought live – and lively – entertainment to many theatres that would have otherwise ground out an endless stream of "kiddie revues," solos by choir-loft coloraturas, college-boy jazz bands, and smirking organists of more local notoriety than talent. In a Fanchon & Marco Idea, the master of ceremonies always got real chummy with the folks, the Sunkist Beauties looked lovely (from across the orchestra pit), and the settings and costumes were gaudy, professional and (for Wichita), dazzling. So were the Idea titles like "Gyp Gyp Gypsy," "Eskimamas," "Fan Fantasy," "Skirts," "Eyes," "Dangerous Curves," and "Knice Knees" that sizzled on marquees around the circuit.

Fanchon & Marco hit the big time when they signed a contract with the fast-growing Fox Theatres chain. Then an arrangement with RKO Theatres as well as the Publix chain expanded their playing time still more. In this way they could book talent for their shows at far less per week than a local theatre could (offering only one or two weeks) because an F & M contract was good for a year or more of guaranteed work.

It was as easy to pick a bushel of Sunkist Beauties for a Fanchon & Marco Idea as it was to knock oranges off a tree in the San Fernando Valley. Every "ballet and military tap" studio in the United States was grinding out dancers, and most of them gravitated to Hollywood in the Twenties in hopes of getting into pictures. By the time the Vitaphone had swept on the scene in a flurry of all-talking, all-singing, all-dancing movies, the gravitation became an avalanche.

The Paramount Theatre in Los Angeles – Sid Grauman's old Metropolitan rechristened as "on of the Publix Theatres" – was the fountainhead of all the Fanchon & Marco Ideas. At the beginning of 1928, after six years of producing shows all over California, the contract with Fox West Coast Theatres was signed, expanding Fanchon & Marco's sphere of influence as far east as the Capitol Theatre in Salt Lake City. By January 1929, a total of thirty-one week's playing time was a reality when Fanchon & Marco's "Rolling On" Idea, featuring everything on wheels and rollers (including 30 Sunkist Beauties on roller skates) rolled into Chicago. Then, during the year, as important way-stations were added in the form of opulent new fox theatres in Detroit, St. Louis, Brooklyn, and Atlanta, the playing time across the continent reached fifty-two weeks, a full year of work for any healthy American girl who wanted to tap-dance, roller skate, ride a unicycle, balance on a ball, hang by her teeth and smile, smile, smile seven days a weekat $38.50 per.

Fanchon (right) and Marco (left) and a typically lavish stage setting (below).



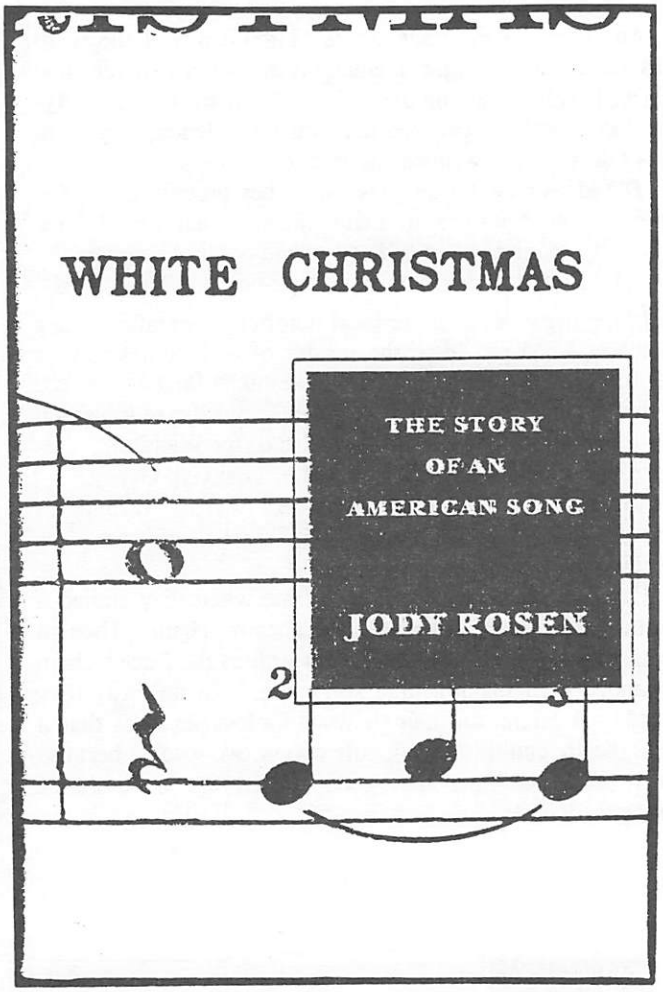
A "Must Have" New Crosby Book

Reviewed by Mark Scrimger

As the dust jacket synopsis below shows, this "biography" of Irving Berlin's most famous (and, more importantly to him, most profitable) song, "White Christmas" overs all the bases. Included are many little-known facts and sidelights about the tune's genesis and history, thanks in great part to the author's access (graciously granted by Mr. Berlin's daughters) to manuscripts, correspondence, and financial records relating to the song. Our favorite Crosby chronicler, Gary Giddins, also gets kudos from the author, Jody Rosen. To me, it seems that the tales told in this book read like a chapter that will most certainly appear chronologically in Gary's forthcoming second volume.

Of course, this story can't be told without numerous mentions of the major role Bing Crosby played over the years in helping this song attain legendary status in both sheet music and phonograph record sales. Mr. Rosen gets it right (perhaps with a slight nudge from Gary Giddins) when he gives Bing a full 50% of the credit for the song's success when it was first released in 1942 and its continued popularity to this very day. Few can disagree when the author states that in most people's minds Bing Crosby and "White Christmas" are inseparable.

Without spoiling your read, my favorite anecdote concerns Irving's unbelievable efforts to actually stem the initial popularity of his most famous creation. You'll have to buy the book to find out why.



WHEN IRVING BERLIN first conceived the song "White Christmas," he envisioned it as a "throwaway"—a satirical novelty number for a vaudeville-style stage revue. By the time Bing Crosby introduced the tune in the winter of 1942, it had evolved into something far greater: the stately yuletide ballad that would become the world's all-time top-selling and most widely- recorded song.

In this vividly written narrative, Jody Rosen provides both the fascinating story behind the making of America's favorite Christmas carol and a cultural history of the nation that embraced it. Berlin, the Russian-Jewish immigrant who became his adopted country's greatest pop troubadour, had written his magnum opus—what one commentator has called a "holiday *Moby-Dick*"—a timeless song that resonates with some of the deepest themes in American culture: yearning for a mythic New England past, belief in the magic of the "merry and bright" Christmas season, longing for the havens of home and hearth.

Today the song endures not just as an icon of the national Christmas celebration but as the artistic and commercial peak of the golden age of popular song, a symbol of the values and strivings of the World War II generation, and of the saga of Jewish-American assimilation. With insight and wit, Rosen probes the song's musical roots, uncovering its surprising connections to the tradition of black face minstrelsy and exploring its unique place in popular culture through six decades of recordings from Bing Crosby to Elvis Presley to *NSYNC. *White Christmas* chronicles the song's legacy from jaunty ragtime-era Tin Pan Alley to the elegant world of mid-century Broadway and Hollywood, from the hardscrabble streets where Irving Berlin was reared to the battlefields of World War II where American GIs made "White Christmas" their wartime anthem, and from the Victorian American past that the song evokes to the twenty-first-century present where Berlin's masterpiece lives on as a kind of secular hymn.

Published by Scribner, ©2002

Charlie Baillie, 1918-2002

ALL of us at Club Crosby were shocked and saddened to hear of the death of our friend and colleague, Charlie Baillie, who died of a massive stroke on November 16, 2002.

We have heard that he died without pain and seemed to just "go to sleep." We can be grateful for that, at least, although we will sorely miss him.

The obituary from his local newspaper provided by his wife Nancy read like this:

"Charles Douglas Baillie (1918-2002) passed away on November 16, 2002. "Charlie," as he was fondly called, was 84. He will be remembered with much love by his wife, Nancy Anderson Baillie; his children, Barbara, Doug, and Nancy; his grandchildren, John, Cheryl, Debbie, Ricky, Michael, Laura, and Jared; and his great grandchildren, Cimonne, Max, and Alex.

"Charlie graduated from Indiana University in 1940 and started his banking career at Continental Illinois National Bank. He interrupted his banking career to serve in the U.S. Navy as a Lieutenant in World War II. He worked at United California Bank from 1954-1975 and retired as Executive Vice President. He then went to Manufacturers Bank in 1976 and retired in 1989 as Senior Vice President and Director.

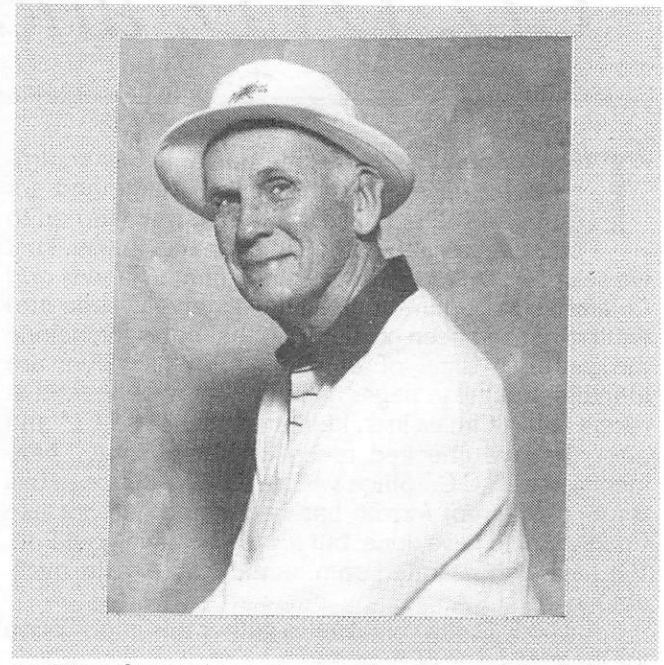
"Charlie was devoted to his family and ensured that they all got together in California during the summer. He loved golf with his friends and was internationally recognized for his Bing Crosby memorabilia collection. He was active in his community and in the past served on the San Marino City Council, was a member of Rotary International (LA-5), served in the San Marino Community Church, and was a member of the San Gabriel Country Club. Charlie also gave generously to many charities.

"A memorial service was held on Tuesday, November 19 at 12:00 Noon at Royal Oaks Manor in Bradbury."

As the obituary points out, Charlie was well-known for his massive collection of Bing Crosby records and other memorabilia and for his writings about Bing. Your editor first became aware of his talents in Bob Lundberg's *BingThings* newsletter. He did their CD reviews and often provided Club Crosby with advance copies of them for use in *Bingang*. When Bob died and his club was discontinued, we asked Charlie to do CD and video tape reviews for us. So did Hobie and Cathie Wilson of the Bing's Friends and Collectors Society. He performed those duties for both clubs for many years, and we knew we could always depend on him to get his reviews in on time and to always do a "super" job.

An amazing fact was that Charlie personally owned nearly all of those CDs and tapes that he wrote about. His collection has to be of immense size.

Not long before his death, Charlie and Nancy moved to a retirement village, thinking it would make life a little easier for them. That was not to be, though, and Charlie's death came shortly after their move.



Just recently, a member wrote in to your editor praising Charlie's work. I sent a copy of the letter to him, as I thought he would appreciate hearing what a nice compliment a member had given him. He wrote back, and I still have his letter here in front of me: "Thanks for sending in the letter from Richard Watts. *It's nice* to have someone recognize your efforts." That was Charlie — very plain-spoken and unassuming.

On his passing, some touching tributes to Charlie appeared on the Internet Museum Bulletin Board and elsewhere. Here are some excerpts:

"The world of Crosbyana has suffered an irreplaceable loss with his passing. He was a truly dedicated man whose attention to detail has helped us all keep up-to-date on the Crosby releases on all media formats from tape to CD to VHS to DVD. Rest in peace, friend!" — Greg Van Beek.

"I just talked to Charlie last week, and I am so saddened by his loss. Charlie Baillie wasn't just a great Bing Crosby fan, but I counted him as a wonderful friend, whom I deeply cherished and will deeply miss. The Bing Crosby world will be a little sadder this Christmas without Charlie around." — David Lobosco.

"I just checked my e-mail to read the sad news of Charlie's passing. He was a true gentleman who did so much for Bing's cause. I shall miss him." — Malcolm Macfarlane.

"I was so shocked when I logged on moments ago. I'd just gotten to know Charlie a little — he graciously accepted my telephone calls, knowing I was a newly rekindled fan club member, as I worked on the Gonzaga event. What a kind man! They don't make them like that any more!" — Judy Schmid.

"I really think his method of "research" is beyond anyone else doing it like he did." — Pete Cakanic.

We will miss you, Charlie Baillie. We'll go on, as we know you would want us to, but things just won't be the same without you. W.M.

CD, DVD, and Book Reviews

THE sudden loss of Charlie Baillie left us scrambling for reviews for this issue. Charlie had not quite finished his contributions, so we turned to other sources to get the information to you. First we searched the recent issues of the *Bing's Friends and Collectors Society Newsletter* for reviews Charlie had written that had been published in that newsletter since the summer issue of *Bingang*. Those reviews are identified on these pages as "C.B." Then we looked at recent Select Circles lists. identified here as "S.C.," and after that we checked recent issues of *Bing*, here identified as "I.C.C." Since we are short of space in this issue, a different format has been used. It's not like Charlie would have done, but it's the best we could do. We have concentrated on material that is easily available in the U.S.A.

Anybody like to volunteer to gather this information for the next issue of *Bingang?*

* * * *

IT'S MAGIC. GAV Records GAVCD 1003, $18.00. Available from Select Circles, P.O. Box 302, Riverside, CT 06878. (Phone 203-661-8421. (Principally from TV and radio). While the sound quality is often not up to recording studio standards, we do get material not otherwise available. C.B.

1. People Like You And Me (w/Mary Martin). 2. White Christmas. 3. Mr. Five By Five (w/Bob Hope). 4. Magic Is The Moonlight. 5. This Heart Of Mine. 6. A Little On The Lonely Side (w/Ken Carpenter). 7. Candy. 8. My Dreams Are Getting Better All The Time. 9. Doctor, Lawyer, Indian Chief. 10. I'm Always Chasing Rainbows. 11. It Might As Well Be Spring. 12. Oh, What It Seemed To Be. 13. The Bells of Albuquerque. 14. Guilty. 15. I'll Close My Eyes. 16. Time After Time. 17. Moon-Faced, Starry-Eyed. 18. That's My Desire. 19. I Wish I Didn't Love You. 20. Almost Like Being In Love. 21. Civilization. 22. Mañana (w/Peggy Lee & Ken Carpenter). 23. Saturday Date (w/Gloria Woods). 24. Hooray For Love. 25. Baby Face. 26. Nature Boy. 27. It's Magic. 28. A Tree In The Meadow (w/Joe Venuti). 29. My Happiness. 30. Buttons and Bows. 31. My Darling, My Darling. 32. Cruising Down The River. 33. Sam's Song (w/Nat "King" Cole).

THE BING CROSBY CHRISTMAS SPECIAL. GAV Records GAVCD-1004. $18.00 Available from Select Circles (as above). C.B.

BING AND CAROL: TOGETHER AGAIN FOR THE FIRST TIME (w/Carol Burnett, Roy Clark, Juliet Prowse): 1. Together Again (Cast) 2. Jingle Bells (Music Man version, Bing only). 3. One Little Word—Married (Bing & Carol). 4. Nashville Cats—Pickin' and Grinnin' (Bing & Roy). 5. One Step Further Down You Can Go / If My Friends Could See Me Now / Here's To Us (Bing & Juliet). 6. Have Yourself A Merry Little Christmas (Bing & Carol). 7. Try To Remember Medley: Never n Sunday (Bing & Juliet) / Moon River (Bing & Roy) / Days of Wine And Roses (Carol & Juliet) / Blowing In The Wind (Roy) / Sunrise, Sunset (Bing & Juliet) / Downtown (Roy & Juliet) / A Hard Night's Night (Roy & Juliet) Girl From Ipanema (Bing) / Alfie (Carol) / Up, Up and Away (Bing & Juliet) / Little Green Apples (All) / Aquarius (All). 8. White Christmas (Bing only). BING CROSBY AND THE SOUNDS OF CHRISTMAS (NBC-TV w/Robert Goulet, Mary Costa, Crosby Family, Mitchell Singing Boys Choir: 9. A Time To Be Jolly / The Sounds Of Christmas (Bing & Cast). 10. Do You Hear What I Hear? (Robert Goulet). 11. The Cop And The Anthem Sketch (Bing & Robert Goulet). 12. There's No Place Like Home For The Holidays (Bing & Family). 13. Jingle Bells Medley (Bing & Mary Costa): Jingle Bells / Sleigh Ride / Jingle Jangle Jingle / Rings On My Fingers / The Bells Of St. Mary's / For Me And My Gal / If I Were A Bell / Jingle Bells Reprise. 14. Christmas Island (Bing & Kathryn). 15.Christmas Alphabet (Bing, Robert Goulet, Mary Costa). 16. Christmas Medley (Cast): God Rest Ye Merry, Gentlemen (Mitchell Singing Boys) / O Little Town Of Bethlehem (Kathryn, Mary Frances, Harry, Nathaniel) / O Come All Ye Faithful (Bing) / Hark The Herald Angels Sing (Mitchell Singing Boys) / O Holy Night (Robert Goulet & Mary Costa) / We Three Kings Of Orient Are (Mary Frances, Harry, Nathaniel) / The First Noel (Bing & Mitchell Singing Boys) / Joy To The World (Cast). 17. White Christmas / Snow / Closing (includes promo for Andy Williams Christmas Show) (Bing & Cast).

SING ALONG WITH BING. GAV Records GAVCD-1002. $18.00. Available from Select Circles (address above). 20 tracks, mostly medleys, in excellent sound. S.C.

1. Singing In The Rain / At The Darktown Strutter's Ball. 2. Little Annie Rooney / Du Du Liegst Mir Im Herzen / Ach Du Lieber Augustine / Oh How Lovely Is The Evening / Goodnight To You All. 3. Take Me Out To The Ball Game / Meet Me In St. Louis, Louis. / Peggy O'Neil. 4. Aura Lee / Cuddle Up A Little Closer / 5. Give My Regards To Broadway / Mary's A Grand Old Name / You're A Grand Old Flag. 6. When You Wore A Tulip / You Were Meant For Me 7. Goodbye My Lady Love / Linger Awhile / The Gang That Sang "Heart Of My Heart." 8. Sweet Rosie O'Grady / My Sweetheart's The Man In The Moon / 45 Minutes From Broadway / Goodbye, My Lover, Goodbye. 9. The Loveliest Night Of The Year. 10. Gimme A Little Kiss, Will Ya Huh? / When The Red, Red Robin Comes Bob-Bob Bobbin' Along. 11. Don't Sit Under The Apple Tree / Pony Boy. 12. My Wild Irish Rose / Come Back To Erin / Killarney. 13. Battle Hymn Of The Republic / America / When Johnny Comes Marching Home / America The Beautiful. 14. My Little Grass Shack / Around Her Neck She Wore A Yellow Ribbon. 15. A Tisket, A Tasket / Billy Boy. 16. Should I? / Blue Moon. 17. Me And My Shadow. 18. Five Foot Two, Eyes Of Blue / Marching Along Together. 19. Cecilia. 20. Forever And Ever.

THE SECRET OF CHRISTMAS. GAV Records GAVCD-1005. Mostly from radio and TV. $18.00 Available from Select Circles (address above). S.C.

1. The Secret Of Christmas (unissued alternate take, 3/6/59). 2. Bing's Christmas Message (12/25/52). 3. One Little Candle (4/2/53). 4. It's Beginning To Look Like Christmas (11/28/50). 5. Mele Kalikimaka (11/22/50). 6. I've Got My Love To Keep Me Warm (9/28/61). 7. Silver Bells (w/Rosie Clooney, 12/11/52). 8. Jingle Bells (12/24/58). 9. Adeste Fidelis (12/24/58). 10 Away In A Manger (w/Kathryn Crosby, 12/24/58). 11. It's Christmas (12/24/59). 12. Medley (w/Rosie Clooney, 12/24/60): (Santa Claus Is Comin' To Town / Rudolph / Here Comes Santa Claus. 13. Rudolph (w/Kathryn Crosby, 12/24/62). 14. Winter Wonderland (w/Johnny Mercer & Rosie Clooney, 12/24/62). 15. Little Drummer Boy (12/24/-

62). 16. 1966 Army Of Stars. 17. O Holy Night (12/16/70). 18. Christmas In Sun Valley (w/Crosby Family, 12/9/73). BING CROSBY'S MERRIE OLDE CHRISTMAS (11/30/77 CBS-TV w/Crosby Family, Twiggy, David Bowie, Ron Moody, Stanley Baxter).19. Crosby Genealogy (w/Crosby Family). 20. Little Drummer Boy (w/David Bowie). 21. Have Yourself A Merry Little Christmas (w/Mary F. Crosby & Twiggy). 22. Heroes (David Bowie, intro. by Bing). 23. Side By Side By Side (w/Crosby Family, Ron Moody, Stanley Baxter). 24. Bells Medley (w/cast): Jingle Bells / Sleigh Ride / Winter Wonderland / Jingle Bell Rock / Silver Bells / I Heard The Bells On Christmas Day / Carol Of The Bells / I Saw Three Ships . 25. Bing's Last Christmas Message / White Christmas (last TV performance by Bing of White Christmas).

BING CROSBY AT HIS BEST. EMI Gold 41343. $10. From United Artists tracks. Available from Select Circles (address above). S.C.

1. That's What Life Is All About. 2. We've Only Just Begun. 3. The Best Things In Life Are Free. 4. The More I See You. 5. A Little Love And Understanding. 6. Cabaret. 7. Send In The Clowns. 8. How Are Things In Glocca Morra? 9. You've Got A Friend. 10. The Way We Were. 11. Paris Holiday. 12. Spring, Spring, Spring. 13. In The Cool, Cool, Cool Of The Evening. 14. A Couple Of Song And Dance Men. 15. I Love To Dance Like They Used To Dance. 16. My Resistance Is Low. 17. Hello, Dolly. 18. Heat Wave. 19. Breezin' Along With The Breeze. 20. What I Did For Love.

BING CELEBRATES CHRISTMAS WITH FAMILY & FRIENDS. Der Bingle BC-107. $16. Available from Select Circles (address above). S.C.

1. The Little Drummer Boy (Bing, 12/24/62). 2. Some Children See Him (Bing &Mary Martin, 12/21/62). 3. White Christmas (Bing, Mary Martin, U.N. Children's Choir, (12/21/62). 4. Wonderful World Of Winter (Bing, 12/25/65). 5. It's Christmas Time Again / Go Tell It On The Mountain (Bing, Fred Waring Pennsylvanians, 12/25/65). 6. We Wish You The Merriest (Bing & Pennsylvanians, Dorothy Collins & Bob Crane). 7. The Christmas Waltz (Bing, 12/24/66). 8. Medley of Winter Songs (Bing & Kate Smith, 12/24/66). 9. Medley of Christmas Songs: Silver Bells / Silent Night / Do You Hear What I Hear? / Little Drummer Boy / What Do You Want For Christmas; Songs of Christmas Medley: Come To The Cradle / Never, Never Land (Crosby Family, 12/24/66. 10. Beautiful Things (Bing, 12/19/67). 11. This Is That Time Of The Year (Bing, 12/19/67). 12. Jing-Jing Of The Jingle Bells (early 1970's). 13. O Holy Night / The First Noel / Come All Ye Faithful / Silent Night / Joy To The World (Bing, early 1970's). 14. Ho! Ho! Ho! Merry Christmas (Bing & Melba Moore, 12/16/70). 15. It's Beginning To Look A Lot Like Christmas (Bing & Kathryn Crosby, Jackie Gleason & Bernadette Peters, 12-1-76). 16. Put It There, Pal (Bing & Jackie Gleason, 12/1/76). 17. Home For The Holidays / Christmas Is Children (Bing & Family, 12/1/76). 18. Love And Joy / Hark The Herald Angels Sing / Joy To The World (Bing & Family, 12/1/76). 19. Peace On Earth / Little Drummer Boy (Bing & David Bowie, 11/30/77). 20. Have Yourself A Merry Little Christmas (Bing & Twiggy, 11/30/77). 21. Medley: Jingle Bells / Sleigh Ride / Winter Wonderland / Jingle Bell Rock / Silver Bells / I Heard The Bells On Christmas Day / On Christmas (Bing & Family, Twiggy). 22. Listen To The Bells / Jingle Bells / Sleigh Ride / The Christmas Song (Bing & Choral Group, early 70's). 23. Medley: White Christmas / Caroling, Caroling / Do You Hear What I Hear? / Christmas Eve / Come To The Cradle / Sing A Song Of Joy / Christmas Is Coming / Silent Night / We Wish You A Merry Christmas (Bing & Family, Glen Campbell, The Lennon Sisters, John Byner, 12/1/68.

"THE CROSBY YEARS." Available in the U.S.A. from Anderson Publishing, 102 Boyce Avenue, Ottawa, Ontario, K2B 6J2, Canada. $22 for two CDs and $12 for one CD. You may pay by Visa or Mastercard. The new e-mail address for orders is: admin@anderpub.com

"Because of the encouragement and efforts of Larry Crosby, I was able to realize my dream of producing in 1975 an authorized radio anthology for Bing's 50th anniversary in show business. Now the entire series is being updated and reissued on digitally re-mastered CD's."

"Following the release of Parts 1 and 2 of 'A Crosby Christmas' and Parts 1 and 2 of 'The Crosby Years,' we are pleased to release Parts 3 and 4 of our award-winning radio series. These two new releases from 'The Crosby Years' follow Bing's career from his last engagements with Paul Whiteman to his arrival in New York and Hollywood. In his own words he recalls his early years in radio and films and remembers fondly his recordings of the 1930's, including his enduring theme song. His two closest friends, Phil Harris and Bob, are among the special celebrity guests."

"It is our intention to release all 14 programs by the end of 2003 to coincide with the 100th anniversary of Bing's death." — Gord Anderson, I.C.C.

CHRONOLOGICAL BING CROSBY, Volumes 28 and 29. $20.00 (postpaid) each. Available from F. B. Wiggins, 5608 North 34th St., Arlington, VA 22207. This series of CDs is well-known to Crosby fans and needs no further introduction. W.L.M.

Vol. 28 — July 3, 1940-December 3, 1940: 1. When The Moon Comes Over Madison Square. 2. Only Forever. 3.-6. Ballad For Americans, Parts 1 through 4. 7. Rhythm On The River. 8. That's For Me. 9. I Found A Million-Dollar Baby. 10. Can't Get Indiana Off My Mind. 11. The Waltz You Saved For Me. 12. Where The Blue Of The Night. 13. When You're A Long, Long Way From Home. 14. When I Lost You. 15. Paradise Isle. 16. Do You Ever Think Of Me? 17. You Made Me Love You. 18. Legend Of Old California. 19. Please. 20. You Are The One. 21. Prairieland Lullaby. 22. Along The Santa Fe Trail. 23. Lone Star Trail. 24. It's Always You. 25. I'd Know You Anywhere.

Vol. 29 — December 9, 1940-December 23, 1940: 1. De Camptown Races. 2. Did Your Mother Come From Ireland? 3. My Old Kentucky Home (Take A). 4. My Old Kentucky Home (Take B). 5. Where The River Shannon Flows. 6. Tea For Two (w/Connie Boswell). 7. Yes Indeed! (w/Connie Boswell) (Take A). 8. Yes Indeed (w/Connie Boswell (Take C). 9. Christmas Greetings To Decca Employees. 10. New San Antonio Rose. 11. It Makes No Difference Now (Take A). 12. It Makes No Difference Now (Take B). 13. You're Dangerous. 14. A Nightingale Sang in Berkeley Square. 15. You Lucky People, You. 16. Birds Of A Feather. 17. Dolores (Take A). 18. Dolores (Take B). 19. Pale Moon (Take A). 20. Pale Moon (Take B). 21. Pale Moon (Take C).

I GOT RHYTHM. Sounds of Yesterday DSOY-605. $15. Available from Tower Records or Amazon. I.C.C.

1. Love Is So Terrific (Philco, 3/31/48). 2. But Beautiful (Philco, date unknown). 3. Ballerina (Philco, 12/17/47). 4. Somebody Loves Me 5. Oh! Lady Be Good. 6. Someone To Watch Over Me. 7. Gershwin Melody. 8. 'S Wonderful (w/Peggy Lee). 9. I've Got A Crush On You (w/Peggy Lee), 10. They Can't Take That Away From Me (w/Peggy Lee), 11. I Got Rhythm (w/Peggy Lee & Joe Venuti) 12. Third Prelude For Piano (Oscar Levant) (These 9 from Philco, 2/11/48).13. Saturday Date (w/Gloria Woods, Philco, 3/31/48).14. Some Sunny Day.15. Civilization (These 2 from GE, 12/11/48).16. You're Wonderful, (Chesterfield, 1/11/50). 17. To See You Is To Love You (GE, 12/18/52). Down By The River (Kraft, 1/18/45).

REDMOND NOSTALGIA CD RELEASES. These have been mentioned before on our CD pages, but this is a reminder that this company continues to release excellent quality CD's of Bing's radio shows, including shows from all decades, except for the very early shows.

For a catalog, write to Redmond Nostalgia Co., P. O. Box 82, Redmond, WA 98073. Phone: (425) 774-1819; fax: (425) 774- 8076; e-mail:Redmondnostalgia @aol.com. Each CD has a full hour of programming. They are priced at $8.95 apiece, plus a $4.00 *per order* charge for shipping. Special prices are available for multiples of 10 CD's. —W.M.

DVD'S and VHS Video

From Ron Hall at Festival Films: MCA/Universal has quietly and suddenly dropped all of these Bing Crosby VHS videos: *Blue Skies, Birth Of The Blues, King Of Jazz, Rhythm On The River, Waikiki Wedding, Connecticut Yankee In King Arthur's Court, Welcome Stranger, Here Come The Waves* and *We're Not Dressing.*

The following are available on DVD but not VHS at this time: *Going My Way, Holiday Inn, Road To Rio* and *Road To Utopia.* There are no guarantee the others will ever be released on DVD. I urge everyone who wants original VHS tapes from Universal to try ordering new or used copies from Amazon.com at once!

Coming on DVD in 2003:

January 18: *Pennies From Heaven.*

March 4: Double-feature releases on DVD from MCA/Universal.

And here is an interesting note from Ken Barnes found on the Bing Crosby Internet Museum bulletin board:

The Universal double-feature DVD's (set for early March) are good news — and with Columbia doing *Pennies From Heaven* (in January), plus Warner releasing *High Society* in late March, this makes a total of *eight* Bing films in the first three months of this centenary year. If this doesn't increase the DVD interest among Crosby fans, then nothing will.

If Bing's work on film is to survive outside of nostalgia, it must be recognized by the technologies of the future.

As someone who runs a DVD production company — and recently produced an elaborate Special Edition of *Holiday Inn* (for Universal Pictures, UK), Ltd.), I couldn't be more pleased at the current news.

For the past two years, I've tried to raise interest here in the UK to produce a Special Edition DVD of *Road To Rio* (in my opinion the finest of the "Road" pictures), which has never even had a VHS release outside of the U.S.A.

If I was able to do this DVD, I would attempt to do it as a region-free disc — meaning it could be played internationally. If there was sufficient support from the international Crosby fraternity, this might help to bring the project to fruition.

How about it?

Ken Barnes

New Books

White Christmas; The Story Of An American Song, by Jody Rosen. Scribner, ©2002. List price $24.00 (hard cover). Available on-line from Barnes & Nobles at www.barnesandnoble.com for $19.20. Shipping is free if at least one other book is ordered

Mark Scrimger has already reviewed this book in this issue, but I wanted to add my endorsement for this great little book. There are many references to Bing, as there should be, and I thoroughly enjoyed reading it from cover to cover.

Bing Crosby: Crooner Of The Century, by Richard Grudens. Introduction by Kathryn Crosby. Celebrity Profiles Publishing, Box 344, Main Street, Stony Brook, NY 11790, ©2003. List price $19.95 (paperback) plus $3.00 shipping from the publisher. Also available from Barnes & Noble at website address above for $17.95 with free shipping if at least one other book is ordered.

Richard Grudens has written several books, most of which we have in our archives, such as *The Song Stars; The Music Men; Jerry Vale—A Singer's Life; and The Spirit Of Bob Hope.* Bing is mentioned in several of them, and now we have a book entirely about Bing.

The book is packed with interesting photographs and has a very attractive cover. It will appeal to the more casual readers in our midst who do not wish to go into the detail found in other biographies.

There are a few errors here and there. For example, the first biography of Bing Crosby was simply called *Bing* and was authored by Ted and Larry Crosby (Bolton,1937.) The book Richard lists, *The Story of Bing Crosby,* published by World Publishing in 1946, is a reworking of that book with credit given to Ted only.

I have a six-foot shelf of books about Bing and am happy to add this book to my collection.

My Last Years With Bing, by Kathryn Crosby. With comments by Bob Hope. Collage Books, ©2002. List price $39.95 (paperback). Also available from Barnes & Nobel at website address above for $31.96 with the same shipping arrangement mentioned for the other books.

Several years ago we wrote to Mrs. Crosby and asked her if she planned to complete a sequel to her earlier book, *My Life With Bing.* She replied that she was trying to finish such a book, but she found it very hard to go back to those painful days at the end of their lives together and in a sense live them all over again. That was perfectly understandable, but we are so glad that she was finally able to do that, and her book is now available.

This book is similar in appearance to the other volume, although it is in paperback form rather than the hardcover edition previously issued. A major difference is that practically all of the photographs used are in color. Many of these shots are from Mrs. Crosby's own collection, and we would never have seen them if this book had not been issued. You will, of course, want the book for your Crosby collection. Nice job, Mrs. C!!

Jody Rosen, Richard Grudens, and Kathryn Crosby were all at the Hofstra Conference and signed copies of their new books for those who attended.

W.L.M.

SWAPS AND SUCH

WANTED: *Bingang* magazine editions previous to the Winter 1995-1996 issue. Bill Woodcock, 122 Station View, Starbeck, Harrogate HG2 7JB, North Yorkshire, England.

WANTED: Bing with Eddie Heywood Orch.: "I've Found A New Baby." LP or CD only. Wayne "Dennis" Nale, 3335 Latham Drive, Dallas, TX 75229-3847.

WANTED: Donations of "paper" materials on Bing from the 30's to the 60's — magazine and newspaper articles, pictures, etc. These will be included in the *Bingang* archives and will be transferred to the new archivist after August of 2003. These materials *will remain in the U.S.A.*, but may be reproduced in future issues of *Bing*, the publication of the International Club Crosby. Write to Wayne Martin, Club Crosby, 435 South Holmes Ave., Kirkwood, MO 63122-6311 and let us know what you have.

RECOMMENDED TO ALL BING FANS:

BING CROSBY: DAY BY DAY

By Malcolm Macfarlane

(Scarecrow Press, 2001)

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OTHER CROSBY ORGANIZATIONS

BING'S FRIENDS AND COLLECTORS SOCIETY
Hobie and Cathie Wilson
236 Andrieux St.
Sonoma, CA 95476; E-mail: Erinssmile@earthlink.net
Web site: http://home.earthlink.net/~erinssmile/

INTERNATIONAL CROSBY CIRCLE (U.K.)
F. B. Wiggins, U.S. Representative
5608 North 34th St.
Arlington, VA 22207
E-mail for *Bing* editor: Macwilmslo@aol.com
Web site: www.crosby.circle.btinternet.co.uk

CRISSI NEWTON'S WEB SITE: http://www.geocities.com/BourbonStreet/3754/bing.html

OTHER FAN CLUBS OF INTEREST

EDDIE CANTOR APPRECIATION SOCIETY
President: Michelle Malik
14611 Valley Vista Blvd.
Sherman Oaks, CA 91403; E-mail: cantorfan@aol.com

DICK HAYMES SOCIETY
c/o Roger L. Dooner
2951 Tyler St., NE
Minneapolis, MN 55418

INTERNATIONAL AL JOLSON SOCIETY
John Wehrman, President
1195 Hickory Hill Drive
Green Bay, WI 54304; E-mail: JWWehrman@aol.com

MILLS BROTHERS SOCIETY
c/o Daniel Clemson
604 N. Market Street
Mechanicsburg, PA 17055-2727
E-mail: MillsBros1@aol.com
Web site: www.cumberlink.com/mills

SINATRA SOCIETY OF AMERICA
Charlie Pignone
P. O. Box 2705
Toluca Lake, CA 91610-0705
Web site: www.FrankSinatra.com

KATE SMITH COMMEMORATIVE SOCIETY
P. O. Box 3575
Cranston, RI 02910

NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF FAN CLUBS
(Disbanded, but may still publish directories).

From Our Scrapbook

Bing with comics Howard and Shelton, Ruth Etting and announcer Norman Brokenshire at CBS in 1932. This is a composite photo with the gentlemen in the background added later in the darkroom.